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Saipan Tribune

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Do you favor a proposal to increase business license fees as a means to boost government revenue?

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INSIDE

Toyota Recall

Toyota suspended U.S. sales of some of its most popular vehicles—including the Camry.

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Mel Comeback

The last time Mel Gibson starred in a movie, he was grappling with alien invaders.

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Avatar is #1

James Cameron's "Avatar" has passed "Titanic" to become the highest-grossing film worldwide.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 21

> It's unfortunate that it has come to this. It would have been advisable for the former delegation chairman to consult with the majority to know if the majority is ready to call a session and to know if there will be a quorum.
>
> —House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio (Cov-Saipan)

Covenants, independents shun delegation session

Froilan says 'majority' should call for session

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Covenant Party and independent lawmakers boycotted the organizational session of the Saipan and Northern Islands Delegation yesterday morning, forcing delegation chair pro-tem Rep. Ramon "Ray" A. Tebuteb (R-Saipan) to call a recess for lack of quorum.

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OUT OF $20 MILLION SETTLEMENT

'Not a dime or just $26' for some ex-garment workers

Workers plan to sue garment trust fund

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Clarita Duquilla, 45, worked for the now defunct Marianas Fashion as a garment sewer from 1990 to 1998 but she has only received $26.36 from the $20-million Saipan garment class action settlement. The original wage award was $34.52, but withholding fees

See WORKERS on Page 4

Former garment workers hold a peaceful protest in front of the Horiguchi Building in Garapan, asking the U.S. District Court for the CNMI to stop the Garment Worker Trust Fund from donating the remaining $625,000 from the $20-million garment class suit settlement deal. The workers are planning to file a lawsuit against the trust fund today, the same date when the donations to 14 charitable groups are scheduled. HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Fitial's masseuse once a victim of domestic violence

Boyfriend allegedly tied Cheng; escapes after 3 days

Qingmei Cheng, the controversial 28-year-old masseuse of Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, was once an alleged victim of domestic violence when her boyfriend tied her up with a rope in 2007. She only managed to escape three days later when he left for work.

She said her boyfriend even lied to the police by filing a false report that she stole his passport and money. Chen said he would beat her up by slapping and choking her.

See story on Page 2

RELATED NEWS

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Local

Benavente: AG told us Fitial did not violate any laws

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

House minority leader Rep. Diego T. Benavente (R-Saipan) has received a verbal response from Attorney General Edward Buckingham on questions surrounding Gov. Benigno R. Fitial "alleged" unlawful order to release a federal detainee to provide him massage therapy on Jan. 8.

"The attorney general said the governor did not violate any CNMI laws on the release of the detainee," Benavente told *Saipan Tribun*e in an interview.

Benavente said he's "satisfied" with the attorney general's response, which he relayed to the members of the minority bloc yesterday afternoon.

He said in the past, local prisoners were allowed to be released from jail but with escorts, to attend funerals and to visit ill family members at the hospital.

"What's unique about this is that it's a federal inmate involved," said Benavente, adding that the minority bloc also understands the governor's health condition. "What else can we do? At this time, there's a scheduled hearing in federal court."

Benavente posed three questions to Buckingham last week: Whether the governor authorized the release of a federal detainee for the purpose of receiving massage therapy; whether the governor violated any CNMI laws in the process; and if the governor did violate a CNMI law, what has the Office of the Attorney General done in response to such violation.

"The AG's response to the first question was, the detainee was taken from the Department of Corrections to his residence. On the second question, the governor did not violate any CNMI laws, and because of that, question number three need not answered," he said.

Buckingham and press secretary Angel Demapan have yet to respond to inquiries about Benavente's statements.

Benavente, a former lieutenant governor, and other members of the House minority refused to comment on inquiries regarding the release of a federal detainee without receiving any official statement from the Fitial administration or any other local or federal agency on the matter.

The House minority bloc has nine members in the 20-member House of Representatives.

On Jan. 8, Fitial experienced severe back pain and asked for Qingmei Cheng, 28, whom he described as one of his best massage therapists. In a statement, Fitial said he asked Corrections Commissioner Dolores M. Aldan for the temporary release of the federal prisoner, who is charged with human smuggling.

Cheng was escorted by Aldan and other Corrections officers to Fitial's residence in Gualo Rai. She was brought back right after the massage, Fitial and Aldan said in a joint statement.

Fitial's masseuse once a victim of domestic violence

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Qingmei Cheng, the controversial 28-year-old masseuse of Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, was once an alleged victim of domestic violence when her boyfriend tied her up with a rope in 2007. She only managed to escape three days later when he left for work.

According to Superior Court records, associate judge Kenneth Govendo twice issued a temporary restraining order against Cheng's boyfriend Nasir Uddin, on Sept. 28 and Dec. 26 in 2007.

Govendo issued the TRO after Cheng petitioned the court for protection.

In her first petition, Cheng stated that on Sept. 15, 2007, she moved out from their house but Uddin found her the following day and brought her back to their residence.

Upon arriving at their house, Uddin allegedly pushed her to the bed and tied her feet and hands with a rope. He locked the house and left for 30 minutes.

"When he came back, he watched me the whole day," Chen said.

Uddin also allegedly took a knife and threatened to hurt her with it.

"I was so scared I never say anything," she said.

On the third day, when Uddin left for work, Chen said she managed to untie herself, ran away, and sought shelter.

She said Uddin even lied to the police by filing a false report that she stole his passport and money.

Chen said Uddin would beat her up by slapping and choking her, but she did not report these incidents to the police.

In the second petition, Chen stated that on Dec. 25, 2007, she had just come from a friend's house when Uddin accused her of having an affair. He allegedly cut her clothes with a knife, choked her, and broke her necklace.

Luckily, she said, a friend arrived, prompting Uddin to stop hurting her.

Judge Govendo dissolved the first and second TROs on Oct. 3, 2007 and Jan. 2, 2008 respectively based on Cheng's request and representation.

The two have a child, according to the petitions. It is not clear whether the two are still living together.

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- Does not imitate actions or words by the end of this period
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- Cannot find objects when hidden under 2 or 3 covers
- Cannot push a wheeled toy by age 2
- Experiences a dramatic loss of skills he or she once had

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Information adapted from the Center of Disease Control and Prevention, Learn the Signs. Act Early.
Supported in part by project H25MC06112 from the MCHB (Title V, Social Security Act), HRSA, DHHS.

Big Steps for Little Feet

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L.A. immigration judge hears 13 Saipan removal cases

DHS files 8 new removal cases

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A federal immigration judge from Los Angeles, California, heard yesterday 13 removal cases, including eight new ones, before the Saipan U.S. Immigration Court.

Immigration Judge David C. Anderson continued all hearings to March 24, 2010, at 1pm.

Heith M. Kaneshige, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement assistant chief counsel in Honolulu, appeared for DHS.

Anderson decided to continue the hearings in the cases filed against Danilo Rejano, Jiang Guo, Mei Wen Wu, Minglong Li, and Zhoumin Wang after DHS filed additional charging documents. The judge said the respondents are entitled to at least 10 days to review the documents.

Stephen Woodruff, counsel for Rejano, Wang, Li, and Wu, told the court that the 10-day period is sufficient for them to review the documents.

Guo, who said he will represent himself in the case, agreed that he needs more time to review the new documents.

Named respondents in the eight new cases are Guangxu Jin, Fu Chen, Meng Yang Yu, Xiu Hong Luo, Jian Guo Zhang, Zhen Xiu Huang, Jiao He, and Marlon Deleon Hernandez.

Anderson gave them interpreters, who appeared telephonically, explaining to them the proceedings and their rights.

The judge underscored the importance for the respondents to be present at the next hearing date, unless due to exceptional circumstances.

"You can be removed from the U.S. if you don't come back," Anderson said.

Except for Rejano and Hernandez, who are both Filipinos, all other respondents are Chinese nationals.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
Bishop Tomas A. Camacho of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa signs a proclamation declaring Jan. 31 to Feb. 5, 2010 Catholic Schools Week, in a brief ceremony on Tuesday that was attended by Mount Carmel School president Margaret C. Dela Cruz and students. Camacho urged the diocese's faithful to participate in its observance that will help instill awareness and appreciation on the values of Catholic education. The 2010 theme is "Catholic Schools: Dividends of Life.

Govendo's disciplinary proceedings set in July

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The CNMI Supreme Court yesterday set for July 22, 2010, at 9am the formal hearing in the disciplinary proceedings against Superior Court associate judge Kenneth Govendo.

At the status conference, justice pro tem Edward Manibusan ordered the parties to file all motions on or before April 2.

Govendo appeared without a lawyer. Retired Guam Superior Court judge Richard Benson appeared telephonically.

Govendo said he will "definitely file" several motions.

Manibusan earlier issued an order that set a status conference during which the date or dates for pre-hearing conferences and scheduling of hearing date will be tackled.

Manibusan said another issue is the possibility of obtaining admissions of fact and documents that will avoid unnecessary stipulations on the authenticity of documents, as well as Govendo's request for videotaping of the proceeding.

Manibusan asked Govendo to file a motion on his request for the proceedings to be videotaped.

Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona in November 2008 issued a decision that found Govendo's statements in a family law case against Roger S. Castillo in violation of the "principles of decorum and temperance."

The complaint prompted Chief Justice Miguel Demapan to appoint Benson as an investigating judge to look into Manglona's complaint.

Benson recommended holding a formal disciplinary proceedings against Govendo for professional misconduct. Govendo denied the allegations.

CDA considers other options for its delinquent borrowers

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Due to the unstable condition of the island's economy, the Commonwealth Development Authority's board of directors has instructed its management to come up with ways for the agency to help a significant number of its troubled borrowers.

CDA board chair Pedro Itibus told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that the agency needs to provide continued support to delinquent loan borrowers so their businesses could be provided an opportunity to recover and grow.

CDA, after dropping its interest rate to 2 percent, had offered its borrowers a package to pay off their outstanding loans based on the principal amount over a longer period of time—up to 30 years for some. This relief program, according to Sablan, has helped many local businesses that suffered severe losses in previous years.

Under the program, which was initiated in 2007, CDA would take out the interest, set it aside, and allow the borrowers pay only the principal amount at a 2-percent interest rate. This arrangement is subject to review after every three years for a possible rate adjustment.

The CDA used to charge a 9-percent interest rate for commercial loans and 5 percent for agricultural loans.

In May 2005, the CDA lifted a five-year moratorium on direct loans and lowered loan interest rates from 9 percent to 7 percent for commercial loans, while that of fishing and farming loans was cut from 5 percent to 4.5 percent.

Sablan said if the economy and the financial condition improve, the CDA would revise the program.

"We've done this…way back and we went all the way down to 2 percent to assist our borrowers. Now, what we're asking our [executive director] is to find some other ways on how we can better assist [delinquent borrowers] and we're moving forward in that direction," Itibus said, adding that new options will be finalized by the board when the executive director makes the final recommendation.

Sablan refused to discuss the new options, saying the concepts have yet to be finalized and adopted by the board.

"He has given us some ideas but we're waiting for him to finalize it and then the board will discuss it," Itibus added.

As of December 2007, about 63 percent of CDA's direct loans were in delinquent status, which translates to about $15.76 million in loans that were in default.

CDA had loaned out a total of $36.275 million to 194 borrowers in 2007, out of which 179 are considered delinquent or behind in their payments.

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Draft EIS on military buildup made easier to understand

Residents have only a few days left to submit comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement by the Feb. 17 deadline. But the public forum held yesterday by the Military Integration Management Committee helped residents and agencies understand more the $15- to $20-billion military buildup in Guam and Tinian, to make it easier for them to comment on the draft EIS.

Gary Kuwabara and Rick Solander from the Office of Economic Adjustment, along with members of the Guam Advisory Consulting Team, including Matrix Design vice presidents Celeste Werner and Gary Hrapla, and Loretta Lujan of M2D2, made a presentation yesterday about the highlights of the military buildup.

ON THE NET

- www.one.guam.gov
- www.guambuildupeis.us

The group also answered questions from some of the 45 people that showed up at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe yesterday morning.

The group was able to break down the estimated 11,000 pages of draft EIS to hundreds of pages of documents for CNMI and Guam residents.

Brochures containing summaries and highlights of the buildup were also distributed at the forum.

"You could get a very good overview inside, into the draft EIS. Basically you'd be able to take away what's being proposed what are the alternatives considered by the military, and what are perceived to be the major impacts associated with those preferred actions, and what they've identified that need to be mitigated, what types of mitigation measures they might propose to reduce the impacts," said Hrapla.

Hrapla encouraged residents to visit the Web site, www.one.guam.gov for more information about the buildup.

Residents can also access the draft EIS at www.guambuildupeis.us.

The CNMI government, through MIMC, has been working on consolidating government agency comments on the draft EIS.

An internal MIMC deadline for these draft comments is set for Feb. 9.

As with the public hearings held by the U.S. military earlier this month, residents yesterday voiced their concerns with the buildup, as well as their support or opposition to the massive project. Residents have been weighing the pros and cons of the U.S. Department of Defense project, which includes military training ranges on Tinian.

Because Guam cannot accommodate all training for the relocating Marines, the military looks at Tinian to provide opportunities for training groups of 200 Marines or larger due to greater land availability.

Tinian is only about 100 miles or 160 kilometers away from Guam.

The northern two-thirds of Tinian are leased to the U.S. Department of Defense. Company and battalion level non-live fire training areas already exist and are used on these lease parcels.

"The land, however, could be developed to accommodate live fire ranges," the draft EIS/OES stated.

The proposed actions on Tinian include firing ranges for rifle known distance, automated combat pistol, platoon battle course, and field firing; and airspace use.

The relocation of Marines from Okinawa to Guam will start in the next couple of years and estimates currently show Guam's population to increase by 35,000 people. This realignment will substantially impact the community and infrastructure on Guam as well as provide economic opportunities throughout the region. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

The Republican members of the Saipan and Northern Islands Delegation meet after failing to get a quorum for a scheduled delegation session yesterday. They expressed disappointment over Covenant Party members and independents' boycott of the organizational session to elect the chairman and other officials.

WORKERS

From Page 1

reduced it to $26.36.

What disappointed Duquilla more is the planned donation of the $625,000 in remaining settlement funds to 14 non-profit organizations instead of former garment workers who are still on Saipan and are facing hardships.

"We were the reasons why there's a lawsuit and settlement in the first place, and all I received was over $26. While we know schools and other groups also need help, we need more help," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

But Duquilla may be luckier than other former garment workers who did not receive a single penny from the settlement.

"I didn't receive anything," said Alam Gir Hossain, 32.

Hossain worked at Hansae as a garment packer from 1997 to 2000.

Duquilla and Hossain, along with his daughter, were among the large crowd of former garment workers, their families and supporters who held a peaceful protest yesterday morning in front of Horiguchi Building, which houses the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

The groups would have wanted to meet with U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson but were told that the judge was off island.

Holding placards and banners, the workers stood in front of Horiguchi Building in Garapan from 8am to 10am yesterday.

Rabby Syed, a workers' advocate and president of the United Workers Movement-NMI, said they are planning to file a lawsuit today against the Garment Worker Trust Fund and its chair, Timothy Bellas, and would ask Munson to stop Bellas from donating $625,000 to charitable groups.

The workers' groups said they provided copies to Munson and Bellas of a petition signed by 306 former garment workers, asking for a stop to the donation.

The former garment workers said they money should instead be donated to them.

But Syed said they are also asking the court to waive the court filing fee of $350.

"We will file the lawsuit [Thursday]," Syed said.

According to the petition, the judge and or the trustees of the Garment Workers Trust Fund did not consider the physical presence of garment factory workers presently on the island who are experiencing hardships and who were not able to receive the first distribution of funds.

"The trust fund trustees should consider first all the former garment workers who are presently on the island before they decide to donate the residual funds to charitable institutions," the petition reads.

Tita Santos, 39, said she worked in the garment industry for 19 years, from 1990 to 2008.

She said she received over $700 and over $145 from the settlement money.

"I believe I should have received much more than that. It's not clear how they computed the rates. I am jobless now, and I need help much more than the groups receiving the donations. I'm one of the original members of the class suit," said Santos, a mother of three children aged 2, 10, and 12.

On Friday, Munson approved Bellas' report that includes the $625,000 charitable donations to 14-non profit organizations.

Bellas notified the 14 recipients of the donations that the presentation of the checks will be held today at 2pm. Bellas invited the media to attend the presentation.

Of the groups that will get a share of the funds, Karidat and the American Red Cross will receive the biggest amount at $125,000 and $100,000, respectively.

The former Garment Oversight Board established the GWTF. GOB, then chaired by Bellas, was set up pursuant to the settlement agreement in the class action against the garment industry. Munson closed the GOB in October 2008 and the GWTF was formed.

Bellas also chairs the GWTF. The other trustees are former California Supreme Court justice Cruz Reynoso and former Washington State Supreme Court chief justice Richard Guy.

COVENANTS

From Page 1

But House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) said the majority members—the Covenants and the independents—should be the one calling for a delegation session and not Tebuteb or any member of the minority bloc.

"It's unfortunate that it has come to this. It would have been advisable for the former delegation chairman to consult with the majority to know if the majority is ready to call a session and to know if there will be a quorum," Tenorio said in a phone interview last night.

Rep. Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan), in a separate phone interview, confirmed the "intentional" absence of many independents and Covenant Party members from yesterday's session, saying the majority is not ready yet to organize the delegation and elect a chairman.

However, the 21-member Saipan and Northern Islands Delegation is comprised not only of House members, but also of senators. In the Senate, the Republicans hold the majority.

Tebuteb, who is vying for re-election as delegation chairman, initially planned to resume the session at 2pm but to no avail because the Covenants and independents were still not around.

Tebuteb and other Republicans expressed disappointment over the boycott of Covenants and independents.

Tebuteb said only six delegation members asked to be excused from the session for reasons that included headache, family emergency, and busy schedule.

Among those with excused absence were Sen. Luis Crisostimo (D-Saipan), Rep. Eli Cabrera (Ind-Saipan), Rep. Fredrick Peters (Ind-Sapan), Rep. Sylvester Iguel (Cov-Saipan), Rep. Raymond Palacios (Cov-Saipan), and Rep. Rafael Demapan (Cov-Saipan).

Crisostimo was off island for a family emergency, his office said. Crisostimo is eyeing the delegation chairmanship, Republicans said.

The House speaker confirmed that House Vice Speaker Felicidad Ogumoro (Cov-Saipan) is vying for the chairmanship.

The Republicans who were present for the 10am session were Tebuteb, Rep. Diego Benavente, Rep. Joseph Deleon Guerrero, Rep. Ray N. Yumul, Rep. Francisco S. Dela Cruz, Rep. Joseph M. Palacios, Rep. Antonio Sablan, Sen. Pete P. Reyes, and Sen. Ralph Torres.

Those who were not at the chamber during the meeting and who did not notify Tebuteb about their absence were Tenorio, Ogumoro, Floor Leader George Camacho, Torres, Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Cov-Saipan), and Rep. Ramon Basa (Cov-Saipan). These lawmakers' offices said the lawmakers were not in their offices. They did not return media calls.

"It would be nice for members to show up at the next meeting to be called," Tebuteb said.

'More insulting'

Rep. Joseph Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan) said it's insulting enough that lawmakers failed to notify the chairman pro tem of their reason for being absent, but it's "more insulting" if the members "were in their offices" but just didn't go to the chamber to attend the session.

The House speaker, for example, was in his office in the morning and afternoon meeting with a lot of individuals.

Benavente, the leader of the House minority bloc, said he's "very disappointed" that lawmakers failed to show up even though the session was announced days ago.

"The Saipan mayor and members of the municipal council were at the session so we could hear their concerns and address important issues like the Saipan zoning law, the stray dog control program, and the local bill line item vetoed by the governor recently. I've always felt that the delegation should be organized as soon as possible. I call this a boycott. We ended up apologizing to the mayor and the council members for a lack of quorum," Benavente said.

The Republicans met in one of the small rooms considered a "break room" right beside the House clerk's office at the legislative building.

After their meeting, the Republicans granted an interview to air their sentiments on the boycotted delegation session.

The House speaker, meanwhile, said he will call a delegation session next week, tentatively on Wednesday morning.

'They let down their constituents'

Rep. Frank Dela Cruz (R-Saipan) said the lawmakers who didn't show up and without advance notice for their absence "failed their constituents."

"They failed their constituents. They failed to represent them," he added.

Rep. Joseph Palacios (R-Saipan) and Rep. Tony Sablan echoed Dela Cruz's statement.

"During the inauguration, the members talked about representing the people yet they did not show up. They let down their constituents. By not showing up, they're not hurting us; they're hurting their constituents," said Palacios.

Sablan hoped that "cooler heads would prevail" and that lawmakers would live up to their promise of serving the people.

Sen. Pete Reyes (R-Saipan) also said that lawmakers "should take their responsibilities more seriously."

But Benavente said "whatever happened today will not change our priority like working on the budget."

The House will have a session this morning.

Reyes said he will do his best to encourage his fellow senators to work with the House Ways and Means Committee on the Fiscal Year 2010 budget.

Seven more in human smuggling case plead guilty, get probation

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Seven more defendants in a human smuggling case have pleaded guilty and were each sentenced yesterday to one-year probation.

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge David Wiseman handed down the sentence on Wenjun Huo, Jian Bo Yang, Shi Ying Wei, Jing Kai Yu, Yi Bin Zheng, Bo Zhou, and Hai Zheng Zhao.

The defendants, all male Chinese nationals, entered a plea agreement with the U.S. government, pleading guilty to one count of attempted improper entry by an alien.

Wiseman accepted the plea agreement and the defendants' guilty plea. He required them to immediately pay a $10 court assessment fee.

He ordered that the defendants be immediately turned over to a federal immigration official for deportation.

If immediate deportation fails and defendants are released pending further immigration proceedings, they were directed to immediately report to the U.S. Probation Office to begin their probation.

At the hearing, assistant U.S. attorneys Kirk Schuler and Beverly McCallum recommended a one-year probation sentence. The defendants' respective lawyers agreed with the recommendation.

The factual basis of the plea agreement stated that on Jan. 5, 2010 the defendants boarded a boat at Smiling Cove Marina on Saipan to carry out a plan to enter Guam illegally.

Last week four of the defendants pleaded guilty to attempted improper entry by an alien and were subsequently sentenced to one year probation.

US commander says Japan mayoral vote not a setback

By AUDREY McAVOY
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

CAMP H.M. SMITH, Hawaii (AP)—The election of a mayor who opposes moving a U.S. air field to his Japanese town doesn't mean the end to efforts to relocate the base, the top U.S. military commander in the Pacific said Tuesday.

On Sunday, voters in the town of Nago in Okinawa elected base opponent Susumu Inamine as mayor over the incumbent, Yoshikazu Shimabukuro. Inamine had campaigned against any expansion of U.S. military presence in the area and won with 52.3 percent of the vote.

The Pacific commander, Adm. Robert F. Willard, said he believes more issues than just the Marine air field contributed to Inamine's election.

"There's probably a broader set of questions and a broader analysis that is appropriate to determine who won the election and why," Willard said. "I don't think it should be regarded as a setback."

Still, Willard said the U.S. has "a good amount of work to do" to explain the importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance to the Japanese people.

"We bear a responsibility to share that message with them and to encourage the Japanese government, as well as to share with their people the importance of the alliance — why it exists and what benefits all of Asia derives from it," Willard said.

Washington and Tokyo agreed in 2006 to reorganize U.S. troops in Japan, including moving 8,000 Marines to the U.S. territory of Guam, as a way to lighten the burden on Okinawa.

Part of that plan involves relocating U.S. Marine air-field Futenma to the northern part of the island where it is less congested.

The newly elected government of Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama has vowed to re-examine the decision to move the airfield to Nago and to "start from scratch" in re-examining a key military deal with Washington on relocating American troops.

The U.S. reacted cautiously Monday, issuing a statement that it was "consulting closely" with Tokyo on the issue.

Some of Hatoyama's Cabinet members said they want the base moved off Japanese territory entirely, a sentiment shared by many residents there.

His foreign minister this month pledged that Tokyo would determine the future of Futenma by May in a way that would have "minimal impact on the U.S.-Japan alliance."

Hatoyama appears to be caught in a no-win situation of either antagonizing local citizens or Japan's main alliance partner. With upper house elections this summer, he can't run roughshod over voters' voices.

"He can't make a decision now that's going to make both the Americans and Okinawans happy," said Jeff Kingston, Temple University Director of Asian Studies in Tokyo.

"It does give Hatoyama a bit of cover: 'Hey, I have to listen to the voice of the people.' But I don't think that's going to cut much weight with Washington," Kingston added.

Under a security pact signed in 1960, U.S. armed forces are allowed broad use of Japanese land and facilities. In return, the U.S. is obliged to respond to attacks on Japan and protect the country under its nuclear umbrella.

Election commission relocates office to Susupe

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Election Commission has moved to a new office in Susupe, which will serve at its permanent base for all future activities and programs.

CEC executive director Robert Guerrero, along with his staff, is now stationed at the former U.S. Passport Office building in Susupe, just across the Supreme Court and adjacent to the Pedro Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.

The commission used to occupy a building on Capitol Hill but its staff would temporarily transfer operation to the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe during election time to better assist the public.

Guerrero disclosed that as soon as all counting was done for the runoff election on Nov. 23, the entire Election Commission staff moved to the new office.

He said he submitted the recommendation to the governor last year and they received the go-signal to move months before the Nov. 7 general elections.

"This location is central to everybody and we want to provide better service to the people. We're bringing our Comelec office closer to the public," Guerrero told *Saipan Tribune,* adding that since the relocation people have lauded the "convenience" of the new location.

Guerrero said the former U.S. Passport Office building has been vacant for many years. He recommended the immediate renovation and repair of the facility upon receiving the go-signal of the Governor's Office.

The executive director hinted that if not for the scheduled general election last year, the relocation would have taken place earlier.

Compared to its Capital Hill office, the new space is three times bigger and has a huge conference room, a lounge, logistics office, record keeping, a big customer service area, and a director's office.

Guerrero said the commission shouldered the expenses incurred in the repair and renovation of the old building.

Meantime, its former office in Capital Hill remains vacant when visited by *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

In a recent visit to the new office, Guerrero showed *Saipan Tribune* boxes of election documents filed at the records section. Now that everything has been settled as far as election results are concerned, he said the documents will soon be placed in the storage room.

Guerrero said that with Republican Party's decision not to challenge the results of the runoff election, the commission can now move on with its function.

At its next board meeting, commission board members are expected to present and discuss proposed changes in the runoff law. The board is also expected to elect a new set of officers.

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CPA to incur added costs due to delayed audit report

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority's continued delay in the adoption of its audit report for Fiscal Year 2008 would incur additional costs for the agency, according to two ranking agency officials.

CPA executive director Edward Deleon Guerrero and outgoing comptroller Frances Mafnas told the board at its Friday meeting that the draft audit report has not been formally adopted by the board since being completed in June 2009.

"If it passes the 45-day [mark], then the audit report must be updated again which means additional cost for CPA," Mafnas told the board.

The draft audit report was initially completed in June 2009 by former consultant David Blake and copies were sent to all parties involved, including the Federal Aviation Administration, the indenture bond trustees and "repositories," and board members.

However, Mafnas said, soon after the draft was issued, a bond trustee noticed a $900,000 redemption that was not included in the report. The trustee recommended pulling out all copies of the draft report and redoing it again.

"We need to get back all the copies of the first audit report we passed out before we can begin to work with the final version. This is the requirement of Deloitte & Touche," Mafnas reported, adding that until all copies are not recalled, the financial consulting firm will not issue the audited annual report of the agency.

Saipan Tribune learned that there are still three copies of the report that have yet to be returned by repositories despite e-mails, faxes, and letters sent by CPA.

Since September 2009, Mafnas said numerous letters have been sent to the parties asking for the recalled documents but they have failed to get any response.

Under the bond indenture agreement, CPA must submit its audit report no later than March 2010 as part of requirements.

Last Friday, the board deferred taking any action on the audit report pending the "recovery" of the three copies. But it decided that a new demand letter be sent one more time.

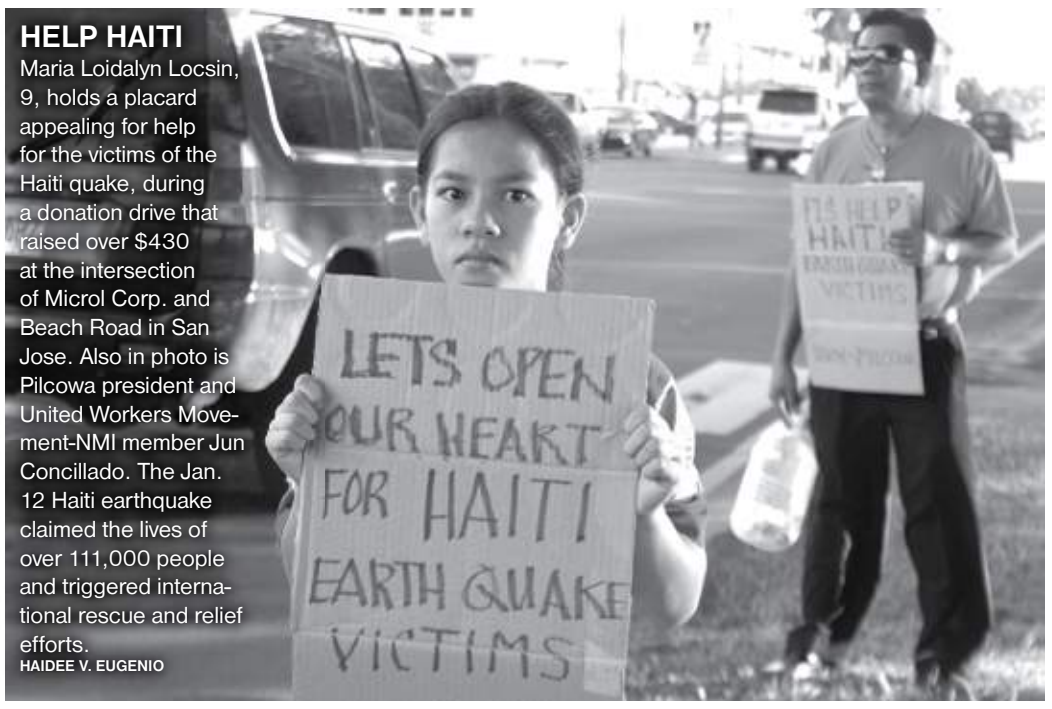
Meantime, Frances Okougbo from bond trustee Bank of Guam emphasized to the board the importance of securing a "confirmation" document or record to prevent the incident from happening again.

"That's a way to protect yourself and the agency. Confirmation letters are important in any transaction of CPA," she told the board.

Ukuogbo, on the same occasion, disclosed that CPA is still on the trustee's watch list as a result of its failure to comply with indenture requirements, specifically the financial reports and documentations.

She emphasized the need for CPA to stabilize its comptroller position and the maintenance of a consultant as required by the agreement.

However, the board opted to maintain its position not to hire a consultant at this time but assured continuous compliance with the bond payment.



HELP HAITI
Maria Loidalyn Locsin, 9, holds a placard appealing for help for the victims of the Haiti quake, during a donation drive that raised over $430 at the intersection of Microl Corp. and Beach Road in San Jose. Also in photo is Pilcowa president and United Workers Movement-NMI member Jun Concillado. The Jan. 12 Haiti earthquake claimed the lives of over 111,000 people and triggered international rescue and relief efforts.
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Transfer of QC benefits to new World Resort stockholder OK'd

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Development Authority board approved yesterday the request of Saipan World Resort to transfer its remaining qualifying certificate benefits to a new stockholder, the Hanwha Hotel & Resort.

CDA economic development analyst Carline Sablan disclosed that the company has $3.9 million in remaining QC benefits for the next six years.

Board chair Pedro Itibus said the approval was in consideration of the company's substantial investment that could help the CNMI economy recover.

"After we reviewed the request, the benefits that the CNMI would derive from the transfer is quite substantial and we believe that it is incumbent upon us to approve it. It is something beneficial to our economy," Itibus told *Saipan Tribune*.

Besides the request to transfer its QC benefits, the company also asked CDA to approve the changes it made in the corporation's identity in 2006.

Sablan said that it was through the audited financial report of the company that CDA discovered the "minor violation" when World Resort transferred 190,000 of its common stocks to various entities in 2006 without informing the CDA.

However, in its letter to CDA the company explained that the transfer took place during the construction of the hotel's waterpark in 2005, just weeks after the issuance of QC. The company also described the stock transfer as a minimal amount that would not affect the assets of the firm.

CDA officials emphasized that any changes to be made in the corporation's identity requires the approval of the agency.

In a presentation on the stock ownership of Saipan World Resort from 2004 to the present, economic development analyst Sablan indicated that in January 2005 the company increased the number of authorized shares of common stocks to 4 million shares at $10 per value per share. On Dec. 15, 2006, the company again increased its common stock shares to 8 million at $10 per value per share. It also created 400,000 shares of cumulative, convertible, preferred stocks at $10 per value per share.

Sablan said it was in 2006 when the company issued 190,000 common shares to various individuals, all in South Korea. This conversion of 190,000 common shares of stocks should have been reported to CDA for approval as required by the QC.

After an executive session yesterday that lasted almost an hour, the board came out with the decision to just issue the company a "strong warning."

In its decision, it required the company to fully read and understand the contract between the firm and the CNMI government to make sure that they will comply with all the requirements set by the program.

Saipan Tribune learned that the company was initially approved a 10-year tax rebates and abatement amounting to $6 million after it injected about $25.5 million in the renovation and expansion in the hotel, including the construction of the water park.

Originally, the hotel was granted total tax rebates of $4 million over a 10-year period in 2004 based on its expansion plan of $14 million.

Five-time Purple Heart awardee is Kilili's guest at State of the Union

WASHINGTON, DC—Staff Sergeant Brandon R. Camacho, who has been awarded five Purple Hearts during his service in Iraq and Afghanistan, has been invited by U.S. Rep. Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) to be his guest for President Obama's State of the Union address at the U.S. Capitol on Wednesday evening.

"Staff Sergeant Camacho risked his life in service to his country and we are indebted to his bravery and dedication," Sablan said. "I am honored to attend the State of the Union with such a distinguished guest. Earning five Purple Hearts is a rare achievement and we are very proud of Staff Sergeant Camacho in the Northern Marianas."

Son of the late Vicente "Pakitu" Cabrera Camacho and Cindy Bower of Raleigh, North Carolina, Camacho grew up on Saipan in the Northern Marianas.

Camacho earned his fifth Purple Heart in September 2009 after being shot in the left knee in Afghanistan. Purple Hearts are awarded to servicemen who are injured or killed in combat.

Nicknamed "Bullet Magnet" among his fellow soldiers, Camacho currently serves in the 10th Mountain Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team based in Fort Drum, New York.

In addition to accompanying Sablan to the State of the Union Address, Camacho will also attend a meeting of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, of which Sablan is a member; meet with Congressional Liaisons at the Department of the Army and the Department of the Navy; as well as tour the U.S. Capitol during his day as Sablan's guest. ***(PR)***

GASKELL/NEWS

Staff Sgt. Brandon Camacho, 24, of Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands.

Continental to launch twice-weekly flights to Rota

Continental Airlines announced yesterday that it will improve service to Rota by introducing new twice-weekly flight schedule between Guam's A.B. Won Pat International Airport and Rota Airport from March 28, 2010 through Oct. 4, 2010.

The flight schedule is as follows:

Flight	Frequency	Departing	Arriving	Flight Time
C09598	Sunday, Thursday	Guam 6:30pm	Rota 7pm	30 minutes
C09597	Monday, Friday	Rota 5am	Guam 5:30am	30 minutes

The service is operated by Cape Air as Continental Connection using its fleet of ATR aircraft, each with a total of 46 economy class seats.

This improved twice-weekly flight service offers more convenient flight schedules for island residents' weekend visits and good connectivity for Rota to and from Honolulu, Manila and nine cities in Japan, namely Sapporo, Sendai, Niigata, Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, Okayama, Hiroshima, and Fukuoka.

In addition, Continental in conjunction with the major Japanese travel agency, KNT, will continue to operate non-stop charter flights from Japan to Rota during peak periods for the third consecutive year.

"Rota is a hidden gem in Micronesia. We have gotten rave reviews from the visitors to Rota, and we are fortunate that our partner, Cape Air, shares our enthusiasm for this special place. Our joint intent with this improved schedule is to work with all stakeholders in Rota to bring more visitors to the island," said Charles Duncan, Continental Micronesia's president and COO. ***(PR)***

PACIFIC BRIEFS

A. Samoa congressmen denies federalization agenda

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI)—The American Samoan delegate in the US Congress, Faleomavaega Eni Hunkin, says suggestions that he wants to federalize the territory's immigration and customs systems are not true. American Samoa is the only US territory where customs and immigration are not under US control. The General Accountability Office, which is the investigative arm of the US Congress, interviewed government and private sector officials about the capability of American Samoa to operate its own immigration and customs systems. Faleomavaega says he wanted to have the study to test the territory's capacity. "The concern that I had is whether or not we have focused enough on really understanding what's going on there in the collection of our customs and duties and whether we have the resources to do this important function as part of the government." Faleomavaega Eni Hunkin says he wants to ensure the territory can enforce its laws.

Unpopular king of Futuna steps down

NOUMÉA, New Caledonia (Oceania Flash/PIR)—The tiny kingdom of Futuna, part of the French Wallis and Futuna islands, Northeast of Fiji, is now without either of its two Kings after the reported abdication of the monarch of Alo. Sixty-five-year-old Petelo Vikena, a former public servant, was officially crowned in November 2008, but is reported to have stepped down on Friday last week. The position of "Tuigaifo" had previously been vacant for several months after Vikena's predecessor (who was crowned in November 2002) was deposed mid-February 2008 as a result of a unanimous decision taken by the four chiefly clans on this French Pacific island.

Solomons villagers urged to relocate from flood area

HONIARA, Solomon Islands (Solomon Star/PIR)—In the Solomon Islands, a chief from the Tandai ward in West Guadalcanal urges those living on the Lungga River banks to relocate. Chief Onesimo Reinunu made the call following the devastating floods on Guadalcanal last week. Villagers living on the Lungga River banks lost their homes and food gardens. Two children, whose bodies were later found, were swept away by the flood. Chief Reinunu said the people should consider moving out of the area because it's no longer safe. "Times have changed and you will continue to face problem with flooding as a result of heavy rain in the country," he said. He called on the government to work out ways to resettle the people from living near the river banks. Reinunu, whose village was also affected by the recent flood, said that it's costing the government to assist those affected.

H1N1 Vaccine School Vaccination Campaign

Students and school staff who want to receive their H1N1 vaccine for the first time can also get in line!

Consent forms are availale at the school office.
Turn in signed consent forms back to school before your vaccination date!

School Vaccination Schedule

January 28th – Thursday

- Dandan Elementary School
- Oleai Elementary School
- San Vicente Elementary School

January 29th – Friday

- Koblerville Elementary School
- San Antonio Elementary School
- WSR Elementary School

Rota, Tinian, and Private School Schedules are being finalized

Visit any health clinic to get vaccinated.

DPH will be back at the schools to administer the 2nd dose of the H1N1 vaccine to students 9 years old and younger

The H1N1 vaccine is safe, effective, and your best protection against the flu this year.

No consent form, No Vaccine!

For more information, visit the Department of Public Health's H1N1 website at H1N1dph.gov.mp or email fluwatchcnmi@gmail.com

Financial aid for military spouses

Spouses of active military personnel can now tap on additional funding sources to help pay for their college education.

The Military Spouse Career Advancement Account, MyCAA, under the Department of Defense's MilitaryOneSource program, has just awarded scholarship funds to Saipan resident Celina Babauta to continue her studies at the Northern Marianas College.

The program awards eligible military spouses up to $6,000 in financial assistance for education and helps in the creation of an employer network program for paid internship opportunities designed strictly for spouses of military personnel.

MyCAA is composed of several key components including (1) training, (2) job readiness (3) and career services and assistance.

Under the training program, military spouses are eligible to receive assistance for training, licenses, certificates and degrees leading to portable career fields. The program will pay for education tuition, licensing exams, preparation courses, continuing education units, general education development tests, and English as a second language classes.

ON THE NET
www.militaryonesource.com

The other two components of MyCAA under job readiness and employment and career services are areas of the program designed to help military spouses prepare for the job market and assist in developing an employer based network for the purpose of assisting military spouses find high paying jobs.

The Northern Marianas College is encouraging other eligible spouses to consider applying to the program.

Celina Babauta, a current student under the business program, chose NMC to pursue higher education as a military spouse under the program. Babauta is married to Maj. Franklin Babauta, a member of the Guam Army National Guard.

NMC

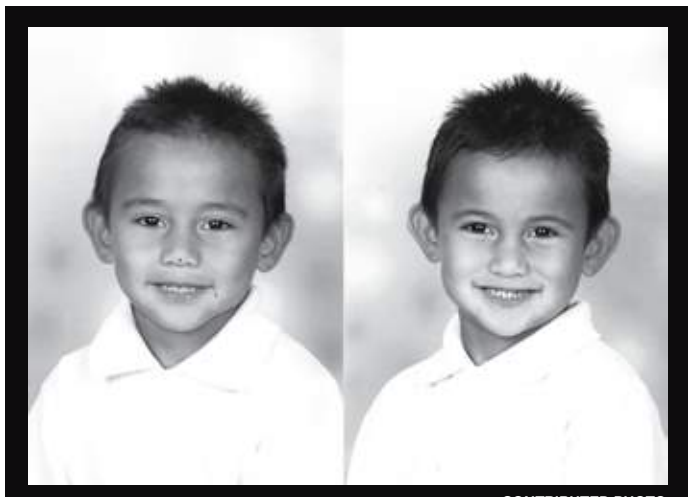
Celina Babauta, wife of Maj. Franklin Babauta, a member of the Guam Army National Guard, has been awarded a scholarship by the Military Spouse Career Advancement Account under the Department of Defense's MilitaryOneSource program. Babauta is currently enrolled in the business program at the Northern Marianas College.

"The Department of Defense has given me the opportunity to advance my education at NMC through MyCAA. For the many years that our family has made sacrifices so that my husband can respond to the needs and safety of our country's citizens, programs such as MyCAA make it all worth our while," said Babauta.

NMC has met criteria requirements to be listed as a participating educational institution under the MilitaryOneSource counseling program under DOD, which handles MyCAA.

"We are pleased to know that military spouses are being given this opportunity. NMC faculty and staff will work vigorously to assure that students from MyCAA receive the best education," said NMC interim president Lorraine T. Cabrera.

For information on MyCAA, interested applicants can visit their Web site at www.militaryonesource.com. The Web site provides a list of participating schools, eligibility requirements, financial assistance and career training information. ***(NMC)***



DOUBLE TROUBLE CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy 5th birthday to our double-trouble boys, Darrell Jr. and Darren Jay Concepcion, who celebrated their special day on Jan 26. We love you always! May you have many more birthdays to come! Greetings coming from Mommy, Daddy, and your sisters.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP10-CHC-054

SUBMISSION: FEBRUARY 25, 2010 • TIME: 3:00 P.M.

"LEASE OF OUTPATIENT CLINIC FOR THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTH CENTER"

THE RFP PACKAGE MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWERBASE, SAIPAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO **MR. PETE T. UNTALAN, MHA ACTING DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION** BY FAX TO: (670) 234-8930 OR E-MAILED TO health1@pticom.com NO LATER THAN **FEBRUARY 16, 2010 CLOSE TO BUSINESS.**

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH PROPOSAL IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

/s/ **JOSEPH K.P. VILLAGOMEZ**
SECRETARY OF HEALTH

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP10-DEQ-049

SUBMISSION: FEBRUARY 11, 2010 • TIME: 2:00 P.M.

"OFFICE SPACE RENTAL ON SAIPAN FOR THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OFFICE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWERBASE DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON **FEBRUARY 02, 2010 AT 9:30 A.M.,** AT THE DEQ MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM, SECOND FLOOR GUALO RAI CENTER, GUALO RAI, SAIPAN.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO U.S. CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE PROPOSAL IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

THE LESSOR MUST COMPLY WITH PUBLIC LAW 15-23, ARTICLE 5, SECTION 8652 (A) - (D).

/s/ **FRANK M. RABAULIMAN**
DIRECTOR OF DEQ

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD MEETING

The regular monthly meeting of the Zoning Board will be held on Thursday, February 4, 2010 at 6:00 PM, Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten DanDan Bldg., Saipan.

A. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes
5. Communications

B. Reports
1. Chairman
2. Secretary
3. Treasurer
4. Administrator
5. Committees
6. Legal Counsel

C. Public Comments

D. Permits/ Applications/ Rezones: review and decide.
1. None

E. Old Business.
1. Proposed measures for nonconforming structures/ uses & nuisance (Presentation; no action)
2. Proposed amendments to Saipan Zoning Law of 2008
   a. Update on proposed amendments to the 2008 Saipan Zoning Law (Presentation; no action)

F. New Business.
1. Update on Zoning Enforcement Activities
2. Hiring of New Zoning Administrator

G. Executive (Closed) Session - Consult with Legal Counsel regarding pending or anticipated legal matters

H. Miscellaneous: Other Matters, Announcements, Next Meeting, Adjourn.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you require assistance, please contact Theresa Ogumoro, Acting Zoning Administrator, at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.).

/s/ Herminia M. Fusco, Chair, Zoning Board

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 28, 1999

Immunity period may be cut short

Labor and immigration officials yesterday said they are weighing a legislative proposal seeking to cut short the current amnesty for illegal foreign workers in the Northern Marianas, which is pending before the governor for consideration. DOLI Secretary Mark Zachares told a meeting with legislators that the department is expecting between 500 to 1,000 more overstaying aliens who may register under the limited immunity program implemented last month by the government. Shortening the period from six months to three months also may not be enough to draw these people out from hiding since they will only have until March to seek amnesty and the department needs to make a final determination of the number of illegal workers on the island, he said.

Governor wants power project delay resolved

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday sought the speedy resolution of the dispute over the stalled $120 million power project designed to increase the energy capacity of the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation in order to avert severe power outages. Describing the power situation as critical, the governor pressed officials of the utilities company to meet with the Attorney General's Office to find ways how the power expansion project could proceed expeditiously. According to Tenorio, he is worried that failure to build the new power plant, whose construction had been initially scheduled to begin late last year, could cripple power supply on the main island of Saipan.

Jan. 28, 2000

Teno clears way for $50M CIP projects

About $50.8 million will be spent by the government to undertake various capital improvement projects on the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota in what officials hope will help spur economic activities amid continuous downturn of the local tourism industry. Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has finally approved a measure appropriating the $30 million loan secured by the government from Bank of Guam under the interim financing scheme prior to floating municipal bonds worth $60 million. From this amount, $20.8 million will be set aside to match federal construction grants provided under the Covenant 702/ CIP financial assistance, for a total of $41.6 million in available funds that will be used to build the new prison, utilities, roads and other public structures.

Fitial slams economic meeting

House Speaker Benigno R. Fitial yesterday brushed off offers of economic salvation for the CNMI from the Office of Insular Affairs without taking into account the continued threat of federal takeover of the island's immigration, minimum wage and custom standards. He said the attempt by the Clinton administration to strip local control over these authorities is still the biggest obstacle to the economic development of the Commonwealth. OIA Director Ferdinand Aranza met the other day with Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio to sell the idea of a package of economic initiatives that a high-level group in the White House is mapping out in hopes to improve living standards among U.S. territories.

Jan. 28, 2002

BOE discusses charter schools with governor

The Babauta Administration, during a luncheon meeting with members of the Board of Education Friday, floated the idea of introducing the local education sector to the concept of charter schools. BOE chairman Herman T. Guerrero said Governor Juan N. Babauta expressed interest on this "nonsectarian public schools" concept - a system that "operates with freedom from many of the regulations that apply to traditional public schools." "It's the idea that schools will be run by teachers or people in the community. Run it like a private school, without interference from the Public School System Central Office," explained Guerrero.

Feds coming to help NMI prepare against bioterror

Federal officials are arriving on Saipan in connection with the nation's efforts to fight bioterrorism, from where the Commonwealth may possibly get funding for infrastructure improvements in line with homeland defense. Public Health Acting Secretary Joseph Kevin P. Villagomez, who said the federal officials would meet with the department and the Emergency Management Office, revealed the scheduled visit. Public Health Medical Director Richard Brostrom said the visit is the next phase of anti-terrorism efforts being undertaken by the local and federal governments, which began last year with assessing the CNMI's response capabilities.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Veteran's outreach in February

To all veterans, their dependents and all concerned: On Feb. 8-12, 2010, Tina San Augustine, the federal Department of Veterans Affairs' public contact and outreach specialist for Guam and the CNMI, will be on Tinian, Rota and Saipan for a Veterans Outreach on veterans' federal benefits. She will be entertaining questions and assist with claims. Date, time and place are as follows:

■ Tinian: Feb. 8, 8am-5pm, at the Tinian Mayor's Office

■ Rota: Feb. 9-10, 9am-4pm, at the Rota Aging Center

■ Saipan: Feb. 11-12, 9am-4pm, at the Office of Military/ Veterans Affairs on Capitol Hill, Building 1364

If you wish to make an appointment or for further information, call Ruth Coleman at the Office of Military/ Veterans Affairs at 664-2650. ***(PR)***

24th Red Cross Walkathon set

The NMI Chapter of the American Red Cross announced yesterday that the 24th annual Red Cross Walkathon is scheduled for Saturday March 27. The 10K walk draws close to 2,000 participants on Saipan, Rota and Tinian. The Transpac group of companies will again be the premier sponsor featuring Coca-Cola, Subway, Glimpses, and Foremost Brands. Co-chairs Roxanne Ferrer and Joshua Sasamoto will be meeting with school coordinators in the coming weeks to go over all the great prizes and fun activities being planned. For more information about this fundraiser or how to get involved, call the NMI Chapter at 234-3459. ***(PR)***

Free H1N1 vaccination at Street Market

Due to the high demand for H1N1 vaccines from the community, the Department of Public Health will be conducting a free H1N1 mass vaccination drive at the Street Market in Garapan at 4:30pm today, Jan. 28, 2010.

H1N1 mass vaccination drives will also take place this Saturday at the Cervical Cancer Fair at the Fishing Basin in Garapan from 8am to 1pm and at the HeadStart Symposium at the Laulau Bay Resort in Kagman from 7:30am to 2:30pm.

The general public can also visit any health clinic in the CNMI to get vaccinated! To learn more, visit the Department of Public Health's H1N1 Web site at h1n1dph.gov.mp. ***(PR)***

SSHA sets report card issuance

To all parents/ guardians of Saipan Southern High School students: Term 2 report card is scheduled to be picked up on Thursday, Feb. 4, from 3pm to 6pm, at the counseling office. All students will be released at 12:50pm.

Puengin Inetnon on Friday

Puengin Inetnon will be held on Jan. 29, 2010, at the Kagman Community Center parking lot. Puengin Inetnon is Kagman's Friday Night Market that will take place every government payday. It will begin at 4:30pm and end at 10pm. This week's vendors feature Lynn's Barbeque, Fong's Bakery, Champs Shave Ice, U2 Collections, and The Library Bookmobile.

Puengin Inetnon is a family oriented event. Alcohol will be prohibited from the event. All are welcome. Come attend Puengin Inetnon for some family fun in Kagman.

The Kagman Friday Night Market is looking for interested vendors to sell food, drinks, produce, fish, clothing, and crafts. Interested vendors can call 256-7678 or email kagmankomunidatassociation@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Kagman Saturday Flea Market

Kagman's Saturday Flea Market will be on Saturday, Jan. 30, 2010, at the Kagman Community Center's parking lot. It will be held every government payday Saturday. You may only sell your used items. Tents will be provided. Interested sellers can call 256-7678 for more info. ***(PR)***

Retirees' group sets meeting

The Commonwealth Retirement Association's board of directors will have a meeting tomorrow, Jan. 29, 2010. The agenda will include the adoption of minutes, report from the chairman, meeting with Rep. Kilili Sablan and PSS Commissioner, etc. ***(PR)***

ABE Spring 2010 registration and student orientation

Registration for the Northern Marianas College's Adult Basic Education Program, which handles the General Education Development, the Adult High School, and the English as a Second Language programs, will be ongoing this week until Friday, Jan. 29, 2010.

ABE Student Orientation will also be hosted on Monday, Feb. 1, 2010, from 5pm to 6:30pm in Room D-1, across the NMC Bookstore.

For more information, contact the Adult Basic Education office at 234-5498 Ext. 1723; visit their office at Building G at the college's As Terlaje campus, or log on to www.nmcnet.edu. ***(PR)***

Autism Society of the CNMI meeting on Jan. 30

The Autism Society of the CNMI will be holding its monthly meeting on Saturday, Jan. 30, 2010, at 10am at the NMPASI Conference Room. Information regarding the group and future meetings will be available at this meeting. All families and friends of individuals with autism and autism related spectrum disorders are invited to attend. For additional information, call John at 234-8803/4 or Larrisa at 322-3761 or send an email to as_cnmi@yahoo.com. ***(PR)***

Huge rummage sale on Saturday

The families of Sister Remedios Early Childhood Development Center have joined together for a huge rummage sale that will be held on Saturday, Jan. 30, from 8am to 1pm, at the Sister Remedios School (enter the road across Payless Supermarket in Chalan Kanoa; the school is right behind the Glory Market).

A portion of each vendor's proceeds plus all vendor fees will go toward helping the school. Come by and support the Sister Remedios Early Childhood Development Center. Don't miss out! There will be so many items to choose from. Lots of big bargains! ***(PR)***

Friday deadline for Census student poster contest

The deadline to submit entries for the 2010 CNMI Census Student Poster Contest is this Friday, Jan. 29, 2010. The contest is open to all CNMI public and private school students and cash prizes will be awarded to the winning students and their schools.

There will be three categories by grade level. Category 1 is Kindergarten - 6th Grade, Category 2 is 7th - 8th Grade and Category 3 is 9th – 12th Grade. Prizes will be $200 for 1st place, $100 for 2nd Place and $50 for 3rd place in each category for the student (or students if a group) and $500 for the school (for 1st place Winner only) in each Category.

Winning designs will be used by the CNMI Census to promote and highlight the 2010 Census in the CNMI through the media and Census partners. Winning posters will be used in a variety of ways for the awareness campaign, the reminder campaign and the thank you campaign. For more information call the Local Census Office at 288-3027/23. ***(PR)***

TRIMMING THE TREE CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Joeten-Kiyu Public Library thanks, from left, DLNR Agricultural Division, Forestry Section staffers Arnold I. Kapileo, Jason Tenorio, and James Babauta, for helping the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library in Susupe, Saipan, trim the overgrown branches of trees planted years ago as part of the library's landscape.

INVITATION FOR BID

The United States Department of Agriculture/ Natural Resources Conservation Service will be accepting bids for Waterway A, B & C construction work for the Kagman Watershed project, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Performance time is 760 days after the receipt of Notice to Proceed. A pre-bid meeting/site showing will be held at **10:00 am (Saipan Time) Friday January 29, 2010** at the Santa Soledad Church, Cha-cha Rd., Kagman. Submitted bids must be received before **2:00 pm (Hawaii Standard Time) Friday February 19, 2010** at: USDA Natural Recourses Conservation Service, P.O. Box 50004, Honolulu, HI 96859-0050. The full bid package and all other information may only be obtained and downloaded at the following website after **January 21, 2010.** (Hawaii Standard Time)

https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=main&mode=list&tab=list

(Search with solicitation number: AG-9251-S-10-0001, select packages tab to view full bid package.)

(NO HARDCOPIES WILL BE HANDED OUT):

This project is funded by the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-10-013

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, is soliciting proposals from qualified engineering firms for the provision of an AutoCad Operator in the office of Water-Wastewater Division, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands.

The proposal shall address the AutoCad Operator's ability to perform the following essential elements.

1. The operator must provide and use his own AutoCad software of the latest version, and install at CUC provided computer. He must also be knowledgeable and efficient of program extension like adobeacrobat, etc.
2. The operator must be versatile from the lowest release software version to the latest version of AutoCad.
3. Prepare construction plan, drawings, shop drawings from rough schematic sketches with minimum supervision.
4. Perform as-built drawings. Create a computerized file of the existing as-built drawings.
5. Perform site inspections and investigations for development of a concise plan and drawings.
6. Read and interpret plans.
7. Perform associated works as necessary.

Proposals shall be evaluated and ranked based on technical criteria listed below and selection made in accordance with CUC Procurement Regulations.

1. Proficiency of the AutoCad Operator (30%)
2. Experience and familiarity in water-wastewater utilities (45%)
3. Availability (25%)

The Scope-of-Work may be pick-ed up at CUC, Procurement & Supply Office at the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, 3rd Floor, Room No.4, between 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM and 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except on Government observed holidays.

One (1) original and five (5) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RFP-10-013, AutoCad Operator for Water-Wastewater Division, Saipan"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No.4, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **Tuesday, February 09, 2010 at 10 AM** local time (CST). Late submissionsand conditional bids will not be considered.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the interest of the government.

All inquiries should be directed to Robert Lorenz, Water-Wastewater Deputy Director at (670) 235-7025 Ext. 147 and Manny B. Sablan. Purchasing Officer at (670) 235-7025 Ext. 134.

/s/ TIMOTHY CONNOR	/s/ ABE UTU MALAE	/s/ ANTONIO S. MUNA
Legal Counsel	Assistant Executive Director for Operation	Executive Director

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER
The Associated Press Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

The Internet war

The Internet has produced a vast expansion of free speech and access to information around the world. But for China and Russia, it has also become a means for waging a covert war against other nations, including the United States—a brazen effort to steal secrets and plant malware. For those countries and for a host of other authoritarian regimes, Internet freedom is a threat, to be countered by censorship, the imprisonment of bloggers and domestic spying.

The U.S. government has been grappling with these challenges for years. But it has not done enough to fight back politically by making Internet freedom an issue in diplomatic and commercial relations and by seeking the international censure of those who violate it. That's why the speech delivered Thursday by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton was so important. Ms. Clinton made it admirably clear that abusers such as China will no longer get a free pass in U.S. public diplomacy or in international forums.

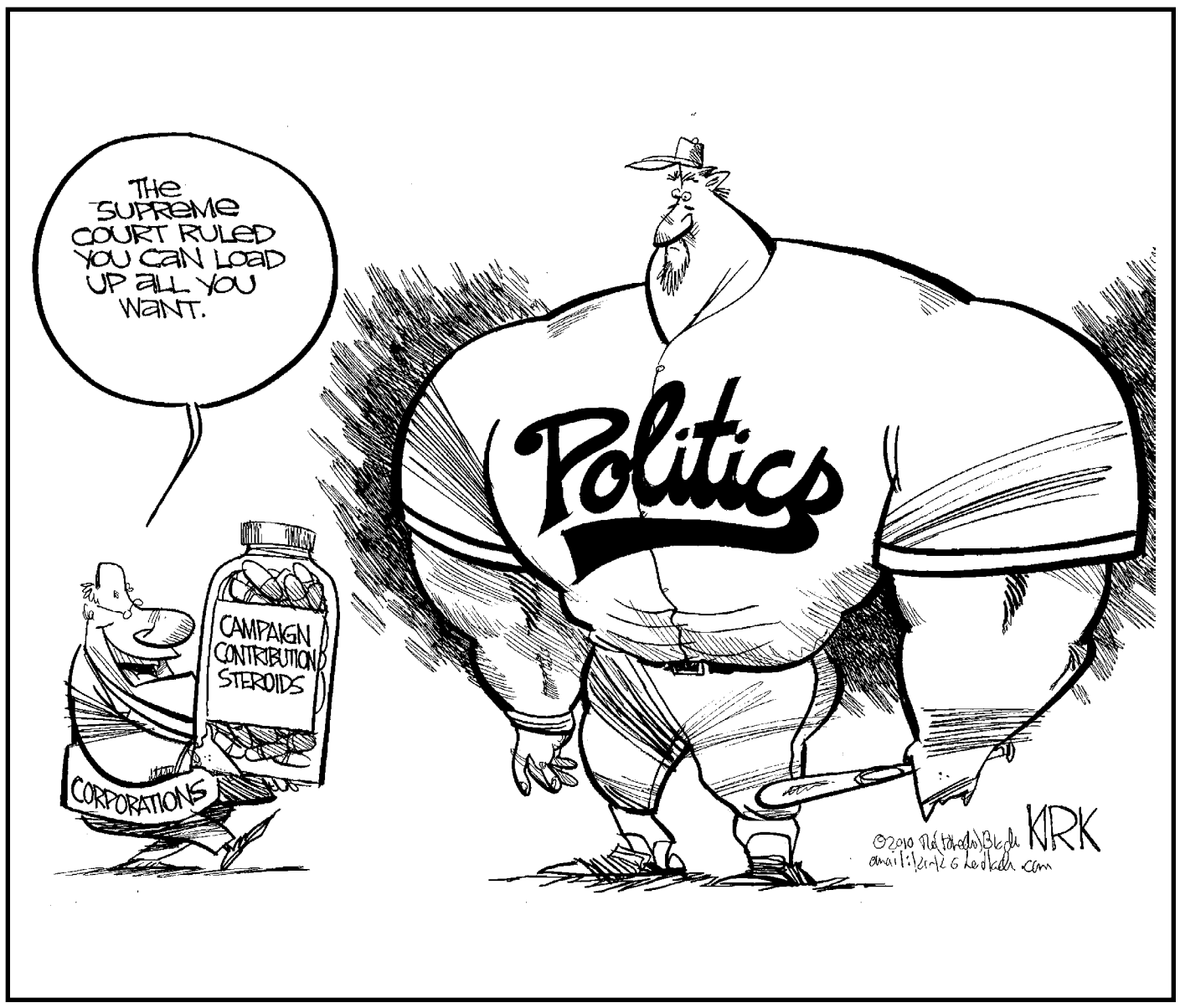
China is worthy of special attention in part because a large portion of the cyberattacks on U.S. military and other government agencies originate there and in part because of the restrictions that it places on U.S. companies that offer Internet services to its citizens. Google's announcement this month that it and many other U.S. companies had been the object of cyberattacks from China and that it would no longer censor its China-based search engine finally brought that issue to the forefront. To the administration's credit, Ms. Clinton repeated a demand that China investigate and explain the cyberattack, backed Google's stance and called on other American companies to adopt the same position.

"Censorship should not be in any way accepted by any company from anywhere," Ms. Clinton said. "American companies need to make a principled stand. This needs to be part of our national brand." This raises an immediate issue for Microsoft and Apple, two companies that continue to censor their Chinese content. The administration and Congress should explore what steps can be taken to ensure that these companies and others follow the no-censorship rule wherever they operate.

Ms. Clinton pledged that in addition to defending its own companies and cyberspace, the United States would take measures to help human rights advocates, political dissidents and civil society groups overcome their governments' censorship. Until now, the State Department has been negligent in this area; it has misspent—or failed to spend at all—money appropriated by Congress for firewall-busting.

Regardless of who is funded, Beijing will probably "go ballistic." A Foreign Ministry statement issued in response to Ms. Clinton's speech already threatened that the new agenda could be "harmful to China-U.S. relations." And perhaps it should be. Far better that the United States raise issues of Internet freedom, discrimination against U.S. companies and cyberwar stemming from China directly and openly with the Communist leadership than allow Beijing to poison and abuse the Internet without paying a price.

(c) 2010, The Washington Post



Steps to safer air travel

By JAMES JAY CARAFANO
THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

The problem in stopping terrorist travel to the United States is not simply one of better airport screening. Trying to turn every airport into another Maginot Line or Fort Knox will fail sooner or later. The best way to stop terrorist plots is to frustrate them before they get started.

Adopting some long-overdue common-sense initiatives could help close security gaps. Here is a short "to-do" list of measures that the Obama administration could act on immediately:

(1) Improve visa security coordination between the Departments of State and Homeland Security. Serious questions have been raised over why the visa of Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab (the Detroit-bound Christmas bomber) wasn't revoked, and why there wasn't additional follow-up with the National Counterterrorism Center. Such measures might have placed him on a "no-fly" list.

By law, the Department of Homeland Security is supposed to set security policies for the State Department Consular Affairs offices that issue visas. That has never happened because of squabbling between the two departments. Likewise, embassies have been reluctant to accept visa security officers from Homeland Security who could work with the consular officers in identifying security gaps and threats. For now, only the U.S. embassy in Saudi Arabia is required by law to have visa security officers present.

At the very least, other "high-risk" traveler countries should be required to have them as well. The White House should press both departments to put these programs back on the fast track.

(2) Put more air marshals in the skies and in airports. Air marshals provide another layer of deterrence against terrorism. In addition, giving these marshals real-time access to databases (both while they are on the ground and in the air) would offer an additional capacity to screen flight manifests for suspicious passengers. An alert air marshal might have flagged Abdulmutallab for more scrutiny or spotted malicious behavior before the would-be bomber tried to bring down the plane.

Currently, armed U.S. air marshals cover only a fraction of international flights, and few other countries have air marshal programs. The U.S. force should be expanded, and the White House should press allies to establish or expand their programs.

(3) Move the "Secure Flight" program faster. Secure Flight is a program that would flag suspicious passengers for additional screening on domestic flights. Although Abdulmutallab's flight originated from overseas, the 9/11 hijackers all left from U.S. airports.

The type of attack Abdulmutallab tried could be launched from a small rural airport in the United States. Secure Flight might flag such a passenger for additional screening. Bombs like the one carried by Abdulmutallab would likely be found in a "pat-down" in secondary screening.

(4) Step up implementation of Real ID. The Real ID program sets standards for U.S. driver's licenses. Again, if a Detroit-style attack were tried domestically, Real ID-compliant licenses would help keep malicious actors attempting to use fraudulent, stolen or altered licenses from breezing through security check points.

As the 9/11 Commission pointed out, improving the surety of licenses must be a high priority. Yet many states are far from ready to implement Real ID. Rather than trying to alter or gut the program, the White House should work with federal agencies and the states to implement Real ID as quickly as practical.

(5) Expand the Visa Waiver Program. Exempting more countries from the requirements that their citizens must have a visa to fly to the United States might sound risky. States that participate in the Visa Waiver Program actually have to agree to a more robust level of information sharing on travelers than states from which America requires visas.

Nigeria, for example, (where Abdulmutallab hailed from) is not a VWP country. So it doesn't have to supply the U.S authorities with passenger name records, which provides the itinerary and other important identifying information. In contrast, data obtained under the program makes it much easier to identify potential malicious travelers and prevent them from coming to the United States.

At the same time, the Consular Affairs resources from these countries that do not pose a threat (like Poland) can be shifted to countries of greater concern, like Nigeria.

None of these steps are silver bullets. But all would help thwart terrorist travel. All would make more effective use of our resources.

None would require spending billions of dollars, or impinge on the freedoms or liberties of the typical traveler.

If we want to make the skies safer, these five steps would make a good start.

James Jay Carafano is senior research fellow for national security and homeland security at The Heritage Foundation. Readers may write to the author in care of The Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Washington, D.C. 20002; Web site: www.heritage.org. Information about Heritage's funding may be found at http://www.heritage.org/about/reports.cfm.

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TEAM USA: How to resolve conflicts

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is a partner with BizResults, LLC. They can be contacted at biz_results@yahoo.com.

Several years ago I was asked to help resolve a problem between some people. As I listened to the individuals, I realized that the central issue began as a minor difference that wasn't handled properly by the supervisor, and it grew until the individuals embroiled in the disagreement felt their differences were irreconcilable.

An important skill in life is the ability to resolve conflicts and disagreements with other people, whether it be with a customer, our partner, or a friend. Conflicts that don't get resolved tend to fester until a minor issue becomes a major problem. The normal tendency is either to ignore a problem, or threaten someone who disagrees with you, physically or verbally, but that is guaranteed to only make matters worse. Your ability to effectively work with people and properly resolve issues will help determine your value to an organization. Being able to listen and understand all sides of the issue before making a judgment requires patience, humility, and wisdom.

We developed an acronym that encapsulates the main points that are needed to help resolve a conflict, and it's called TEAM USA. Using it can help create better teamwork as you resolve conflicts that inevitably arise. Here are the seven steps to explain the process in further detail:

Thank the person for the complaint or for sharing an issue with you. Consider the complaint as if it were a valuable gift from the person who gives it to you. By taking the time to share the problem, you can better understand the person's grievance and work to resolve it. A typical business hears from only 4 percent of its dissatisfied customers. The other 96 percent quietly go away and 91 percent of them will never return. Customers are trying to help you understand where you failed to satisfy their expectations when they complain. Show your gratitude verbally and nonverbally. This sets a positive tone for the person to express their dissatisfaction.

Explain why you appreciate the complaint. Thanking someone is counterintuitive to the reaction someone usually expects when a problem is expressed. Qualify your "thank you" by saying something about how hearing the complaint will allow you to better address the problem. For example: "Thank you for telling me about this situation. It gives me a chance to improve or work together to resolve the situation."

Apologize for the mistake after you have listened to their grievance. Surveys reveal that about half of service providers do not apologize *at all at any point in the exchange*. If you apologize before someone has had a chance to explain any of the details it does not seem as sincere because service providers don't even know what they are apologizing for yet. If you feel the problem is not your fault, you can still say something like: "I'm sorry that you feel this way and I hope we can resolve the difference."

Make a promise to do something about the problem immediately. This step is perhaps the easiest to say. "I promise you I'll do my best to fix this situation as soon as possible." Hearing it makes the other person relax because they know you are going to do something. Service recovery has two aspects: psychological and tangible. The first four steps are part of the psychological response and cost nothing. If the issue is too large to resolve right away, then do what you can immediately and then set a time to meet again or let the other person know what you will do to report any progress.

Understand the problem by asking for information. Say something like: "In order for me to give you fast service, could you please give me some information." Don't say something like: "I need some information, otherwise I can't help you." Ask what it will take to meet their needs or to satisfy them. Or ask them if they will be satisfied if you do the specific thing for them that's related to their problem.

Solve the mistake—promptly. Do what you said you would do. Also, do it with a sense of urgency. If it's a customer, you impress them with your quick reaction. If it's someone in a relationship, they'll feel you value the relationship.

Ask the person if they are satisfied. Follow up and find out what happened. Ask them directly if they are satisfied with what you did for them. Thank them again for their complaint.

You should look at complaints as an opportunity to build a stronger relationship with customers, employees or important people in your life. For a business, taking care of your customers and listening to their needs can become a competitive edge.

Letters to the Editor

Massage-gate? Bah, humbug

Anybody out there had a case of spinal stenosis lately? Didn't think so. If you had, you'd understand what Governor Fitial has gone through since his delicate operation five years ago, which could've been, but fortunately wasn't, his final passing.

Just for a moment picture in your mind the carcass of a pig or cow on the butchering table, with its ribs exposed, ready to barbecue for the next fiesta. Now picture slicing open the spine. Twice. Get the idea? You should be so fortunate your spine was not cleaved open. Who is to say Governor Fitial was not in such excruciating torment that he would not have sacrificed everything just to relieve it? Even to allegedly seek the release of a federal detainee from jail, whom he knew in the past and could in the present ease his specific type of suffering—or else? And who among you would wish the worse unto him—if this life-saving therapy wasn't administered—the pain, the possible crippling of body or even death? Don't pretend otherwise if you haven't had spinal stenosis.

And that "abuse of power while in public office" charge? Nonsense. I call it an act by Governor Fitial just to stay alive. In 2006, at the onset of Governor Fitial's first term, when his suffering became too much to bear and he was rushed to an operation in southern California, I contacted my daughter in San Francisco, who is a chief nurse, and she warned me of spinal stenosis' complications—and that he might not make it.

And the implied "breach of national security"? I'm all for protecting our community and islands' borders. Put me at the top of the list to prevent terrorists from (rogue) communist countries to infiltrate by subterfuge, whether it be as incoming tourists or aliens brought in to work on (military) projects, or those alien workers presently on island collaborating inside their secret mosques who could be sleeper agents itching for U.S. green cards. Or, as in the case of the Chinese masseuse in question, being caught with two dozen other infiltrators attempting to illegally enter Guam by boat. If these aliens are found to be extremists, justice should be swift and final.

But not in this case concerning our governor. What breach? Said detainee held not in a federal penitentiary as she should've been but in a local cell, patted down then removed by local law enforcement personnel under heavy guard while being escorted a couple miles for a brief period of time—explicitly to avert what could've been the last hoorah for the top community leader—and immediately returned by four pistol packing cops?

At worst, it's good for a laugh. The story smacks of a Saturday night live comedy routine or late night talk show fodder meant to sell tickets and increase viewership ratings of the dog-eat-dog competing media to a nation in need of titillation. And to an American population weary of the 10-to-15 percent jobless rate, the collapse of mighty financial institutions and the failed promises of a first-year president with a less than 47 percent approval rating.

The tragedy in this entire episode belongs to those who hate the governor's guts. There's the Republican Party attack dogs of failed gubernatorial candidate Heinz Hofschneider—who was trounced twice by Uncle Ben for the governorship in successive elections and once for House speaker years ago; and the once-again inflamed cabal who for years took glee in attacking Governor Fitial's policies now claim moral indignation. They remind me of beasts in rut, having been trampled in the past by the governor, falling all over themselves today seeking any misstep by Uncle Ben to demonize him and wreak their vengeance.

Someone wrote that the fault of massage-gate lay not with the governor's alleged request but with the Department of Correction director's decision to release the detainee. In my opinion this is a miscue by federal officials still unprepared to administer their lawful mandate since Nov. 28, yet are assumed to be in charge of cases like this.

And the push to "recall" Governor Fitial from office? Spare yourself the embarrassment. Now that they have an opening to exploit, however, one absurdity is guaranteed. Leave it to those suckling cynics I mentioned above to spread their bitterness for all the wrong reasons.

Lee Andersen
Chalan Kanoa, Saipan

Disability access

Para todo i man membron i 17th CNMI Legislature: Buenas para hamyo todo! Malago'yu' para hu soyu' todo i man membro para hu ma bisita tatte i lai ni ha ma-manda pot asunton disability access *gi halum i CNMI. Sumen impottante esti para hu to rekunose ta'lo sis megai na bisnes yan lugat bisnis ti man la'yiyi pot esti i* disability access.

A lot of businesses, major hotels, restaurants, grocery stores, and even churches are showing poor reasonable accommodations in regards to disability access. Proper parking ramps are not strategically situated, parking spaces are poorly situated, entrance doors are not accessible, and door ramps are not in place that wheelchair clients such as myself have to struggle hard to jump our chairs just to make it to these establishments.

Although a lot of business establishments in the CNMI do not show reasonable accommodations for people on wheelchairs, there are some that are commendable for showing courtesy and seriousness in accommodating persons with disability. Joeten Enterprises is a good example of the kind of business that caters to the needs of people with disability.

As a person with disability (wheelchair-bound) I am finding it hard to believe that as simple as door ramps in front of businesses are hard to find in the CNMI. Because of this, I am kindly urging you, President Paul Manglona, and Speaker Froilan Tenorio to discuss this issue with the members of your chambers. Thank you very much. Si Yu'us ma'ase. Hafa Adai, Tirow,

Alexandro "The Colonel" Sablan
Dandan, Saipan

Bon voyage

The committee heads and members of the OFW Support Group and the Marianas Association of Filipino Engineers and Architects, MAFEA, would like to extend our warmest and sincere appreciation for an outstanding Filipino public servant, Ms. Joan Lourdes D. Lavilla, labor attaché, Philippine Overseas Labor Office of the Philippine Consulate General Post, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Ms. Bing Lavilla's hard work and dedication in the service of all overseas Filipino workers on Saipan is of great importance and she deserves to be regarded as a commendable and trusted Philippine government overseas employee. Your tireless effort in assisting and protecting the interest of overseas Filipino workers in labor-related matters is remarkable. You showed tremendous perseverance and understanding for all OFW in times of need.

Bon voyage to you on your way home to the Philippines and best wishes on your new assignment and future endeavor wherever it is. On behalf of the OSG and MAFEA officers and members, we will always remember you as a good friend and outstanding public servant. Mabuhay! God Bless and more power!

Carlito J. Marquez
Chairman, OSG Welfare Committee
Puerto Rico, Saipan

Confused and living in the past

Mr. Speaker: You should listen to the Senate President, Sen. Paul Manglona, and the Senate Floor Leader, Sen. Pete Reyes.

Priorities such as the economy, CHC, CUC, Retirement Fund and the general well-being of the public, especially the voters, should be your utmost priorities. The days of terminating individuals via fax is over, and its time to get down to your promises and deliver on them, Mr. Speaker.

I do not believe that raising fees in a down economy is the proper avenue and it was not on your platform to begin with. This is always the case when an individual is running for office: win and then change the priorities or platform.

The CNMI government lacks enforcement in their policies and yet you want to add on additional burden. Get real, Mr. Speaker.

Gregorio Cruz Jr.
President, Taotao Tano CNMI Inc.

How *not* to manage

Hmmm…let me see if I got this right: CPA is losing $18,288 on its parking scheme and is scheduled to keep on losing, so therefore it will continue the scheme. Who says CPA does not know how to manage? I may not be the smartest person on Earth but if I hit myself on the head and it hurts, I am smart enough to stop it. Apparently CPA is not.

Frank Oliver
Sahuarita, Arizona

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼73°	▲85° ▼74°	▲85° ▼74°	▲85° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Cloudy	▲79	▼73
Palau	Showers	▲85	▼76
Yap	Partly Sunny	▲86	▼76
Chuuk	Mostly Sunny	▲86	▼76
Pohnpei	Showers	▲84	▼76
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲89	▼76
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼79

Around The Globe

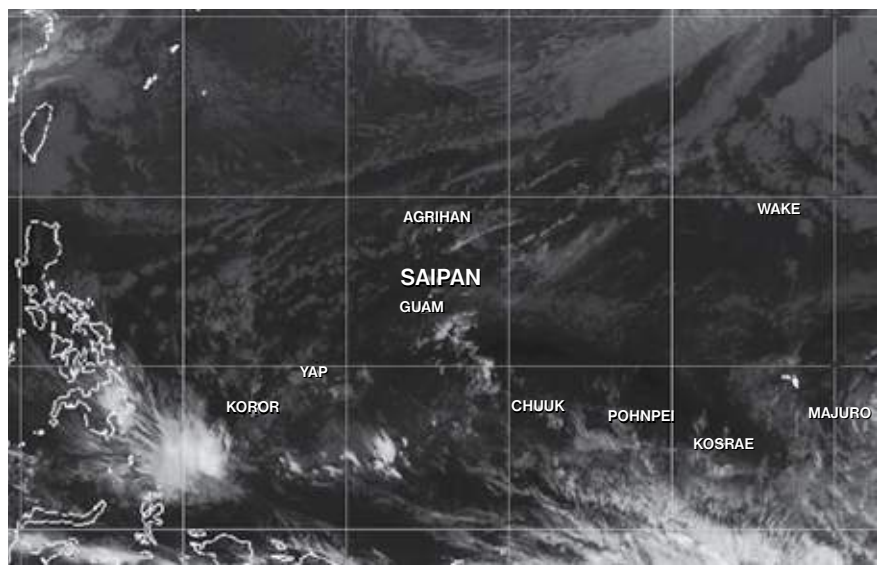
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲74	▼59
Beijing	Partly Sunny	▲36	▼14
Hong Kong	Showers	▲73	▼64
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲78	▼68
London	Cloudy	▲39	▼34
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲66	▼48
Manila	Cloudy	▲89	▼66
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲80	▼59
Miami	Sunny	▲76	▼64
New York	Cloudy	▲41	▼25
Osaka	Rain	▲58	▼36
Paris	Dreary	▲36	▼25
Pusan	Cloudy	▲59	▼35
Rome	Showers	▲47	▼31
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲50	▼38
San Francisco	Partly Sunny	▲58	▼47
Seoul	Partly Sunny	▲40	▼13
Tokyo	Rain	▲58	▼47
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲46	▼27

Tides

Saipan Harbor

7:12 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
12:07 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.4 Feet
5:05 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2010
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N143E to north of the northernmost Mariana Islands at 22N145E to beyond 130E at 19N. Cloudiness and patchy rain are found along and up to 200 miles northwest of a line from 25N156E to 18N130E. A shear line weaves west-southwestward from 16N180 to south of Enewetak at 10N162E to just south of Guam at 12N145E. Patchy cloudiness and scattered light showers are present along and up to 100 miles north of the shear line. A near-equatorial trough extends eastward from 3N130E through a weak circulation centered well south of Guam at 4N145E to 4N155E then curves southeastward to end near EQ179E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are occurring southwest of Palau west of a line from 6N133E to 3N133E. Scattered showers are located southeast of Yap within 100 miles of a line from 4N137E to 4N143E south of Pohnpei and Kosrae within 60 miles of a line from 5N155E to 4N164E and finally over Tarawa and the eastern Marshall Islands in an area bounded by a line from 2N170E to 10N175E to 10N180 to EQ176E back to EQ170E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:47 AM	6:13 PM
Friday	6:47 AM	6:14 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:14 PM
Sunday	6:46 AM	6:15 PM
Monday	6:46 AM	6:15 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	4:03 PM	4:30 AM
Friday	5:10 PM	5:29 AM
Saturday	6:16 PM	6:25 AM
Sunday	7:20 PM	7:16 AM
Monday	8:20 PM	8:03 AM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 28, 2010

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW287	6:00am	7:30pm	Daily via NRT
NW638	8:00am	10:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW297	4:45pm	7:30pm	Daily
NW289	5:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am	
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

CA8282	3:15am	7:00am	1, 5

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 4, 5, 7 via PUS
C09603/893	3:15pm	9:10pm	3, 5 via GUM-PALAU
OZ606/715	3:20pm	11:30pm	7 via ICN
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:10am	3:45am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:00am	2:30am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:00am	3:45am	5, 6 via ROP
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW288	12:05pm	1:35am+1	Daily via NRT effective Jan 25
NW277	8:30pm	1:00am+1	3, 6
NW639	9:00pm	1:35am+1	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW290	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
NW298	10:05am	2:50pm	Daily
NW288	9:00pm	1:35am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm	
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

CA8281	6:40pm	1:55am+1	4, 7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ716/605	12:30am	2:20pm	4, 6 via ICN
OZ706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via PUS
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0892/9596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	3,5 via PALAU-GUM
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2 ,4 ,6, 7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4 ,6 ,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CA: China Airlines; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Business

Toyota halts US sales of Camry, 7 other models

WASHINGTON (AP)—Toyota suspended U.S. sales of some of its most popular vehicles—including the best-selling car in America, the Camry—to fix sticking gas pedals that could make the cars accelerate without warning.

In another blow to the world's No. 1 automaker, Toyota Motor Corp. said Tuesday it would halt some production at six assembly plants beginning the week of Feb. 1 "to assess and coordinate activities."

The company said it would stop selling eight models of cars and trucks, a significant portion of its fleet. The suspension comes after a recall of the same models last week involving 2.3 million vehicles.

Toyota has said it was unaware of any accidents or injuries due to the pedal problems associated with the recall, but could not rule them out for sure.

"This action is necessary until a remedy is finalized," said Bob Carter, Toyota's group vice president and general manager.

The Japanese automaker said the sales suspension includes the following models: the 2009-2010 RAV4, the 2009-2010 Corolla, the 2007-2010 Camry, the 2009-2010 Matrix, the 2005-2010 Avalon, the 2010 Highlander, the 2007-2010 Tundra and the 2008-2010 Sequoia.

AP

A 2010 Toyota Corolla is shown at San Francisco Toyota car dealership in San Francisco, Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2010.

Some dealers suggested taking vehicles to dealerships for inspections if people have safety concerns.

Aaron Bragman, an auto analyst for the consulting firm IHS Global Insight in Troy, Mich., said Toyota typically sells about 65,000 Camrys and Corollas a month, and the frozen sales could strike at the company's bottom line and reputation for quality.

"That's huge if they can't sell these and they don't have a fix identified. They need to go and get a solution to this fast," Bragman said.

Toyota sold more than 34,000 Camrys in December, making the midsize sedan America's best-selling car. It commands 3.4 percent of the U.S. market and sales rose 38 percent from a year earlier. Sales of the Corolla and Matrix, a small sedan and a hatchback, totaled 34,220 last month, making up 3.3 percent of the market and sales up nearly 55 percent from December of 2008.

UN: 27 million people became unemployed in 2009

DAVOS, Switzerland (AP)—Twenty-seven million people around the world lost their jobs in 2009, the U.N. labor agency said Wednesday, warning of a jobless recovery in a report released on the opening day of the World Economic Forum.

About 12 million of the newly unemployed were in North America, Japan and Western Europe, the International Labor Organization said. The jobless jumped by nearly four million in both Eastern Europe and Latin America, while unemployment rates were more stable last year in Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

The figures point to the need for a "global jobs pact" to boost employment around the world, the ILO said.

"Avoiding a jobless recovery is the political priority of today," ILO chief Juan Somavia said. "We need the same policy decisiveness that saved banks now applied to save and create jobs and livelihoods of people."

In an 82-page report, the Geneva-based agency said it expected unemployment to remain high through 2010, with perhaps an additional 3 million people in the rich world losing their jobs or unable to find employment as they enter the job market.

Not all the unemployed were fired from jobs. The ILO said youth unemployment has increased by over 10 million in the last two years, the worst surge since the agency began compiling global statistics in 1991.

To address the problem, the ILO wants governments to adopt a two-pronged approach of employment creation and better unemployment benefits, even if the latter may prove a disincentive for some people looking for jobs.

Diaz is newest Bank of Guam VP

HAGATNA, Guam—The Bank of Guam Board of Directors, management and staff are proud to announce that Jessica L.G. Diaz has been promoted to Vice President/Retail Banking Group Manager.

Diaz

Diaz is a 1999 alumna of the Academy of Our Lady of Guam and then graduated in 2003 from the University of Guam with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration.

With the Bank since 2003, Diaz was the 2008 SBA Banker of the Year, and earned the Bank of Guam's Loan Officer of the Year award in 2009. ***(PR)***

As Bernanke awaits 2nd term, Fed mulls exit plan

WASHINGTON (AP)—Now that the economy is on the mend, the Federal Reserve this year can focus on how and when to pull back the stimulus money pumped out to fight the financial crisis. With his prospects for another term brightening, Ben Bernanke will lead that effort.

At their first meeting of the year, Fed policymakers are likely weighing such matters, including which tools to use. The officials are slated to issue a policy statement Wednesday when they wrap up their two-day session.

No major changes in rates or economic support programs are expected to be announced. The big question is whether Fed policymakers will signal their timing and strategy to reverse course.

"At some point, the Fed will have to start giving guidance about their exit-strategy plans," said Chris Rupkey, an economist at the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi.

For now, the Fed is all but certain to leave its key bank lending rate, which affects consumer loans, at a record low near zero. Economists also expect the Fed to renew a pledge to hold this rate, called the federal funds rate, at record lows for an "extended period"—viewed as at least six months.

Nation

Dems lack workable plan and retreat on health care

WASHINGTON (AP)—Democrats retreated Tuesday from a quick push to pass President Barack Obama's health care overhaul, lacking a workable strategy to salvage the sweeping legislation that has consumed Congress for more than a year.

"There is no rush," Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., said after a meeting of Senate Democrats. His comments came as two centrists said they would oppose the plan Democratic leaders were considering to reconcile differences between the House and Senate bills and put comprehensive legislation on Obama's desk.

A week after the loss of a Massachusetts Senate seat—their 60th vote—cost Democrats undisputed control of the congressional agenda, leaders are still casting about for a way forward. Given the congressional schedule, it could be weeks—the end of February at the earliest—before they act.

Obama's speech to tout plans to ENERGIZE ECONOMY

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama will try to pivot past rocky times for the nation and himself Wednesday night in his first State of the Union address, offering a skeptical public repackaged plans to energize the economy, stem a tide of red ink and strengthen anti-terror defenses.

He'll also be trying to revive his own "yes we can" image.

One year into office, and a week after pledging to do better at "speaking directly to the American people," Obama faces urgent challenges as he stands before lawmakers gathered in the Capitol and a prime-time television audience at home for the constitutionally mandated ritual of U.S. governing. The country has lost more than 7 million jobs since the recession began two years ago, unemployment is stuck at 10 percent, and the government is grappling with a record $1.4 trillion deficit.

Obama

Obama's presidency is troubled as well. The percentage of Americans giving him a thumbs-up has fallen precipitously, from 74 percent when he took office to 56 percent now. He hasn't had a breakout legislative or diplomatic victory, and he's failed to break Washington's partisanship as promised. Then last week, an upset Republican victory in a Massachusetts Senate race threw Obama's signature domestic priority, a sweeping health care overhaul, into jeopardy and shined a spotlight on economic angst now being taken out on him.

Among the expected ideas in Obama's speech: an emphasis on education, with calls for more accountability for performance but also more money to support reforms. Obama's next budget proposal is likely to suggest consolidating a series of elementary and secondary school programs, but overall, would increase Education Department spending more by than 6 percent.

4 charged in phone scheme at La. senator's office

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—A conservative activist who posed as a pimp to target the community-organizing group ACORN and the son of a federal prosecutor were among four men arrested and accused of trying to tamper with phones at Democratic Sen. Mary Landrieu's office.

Activist James O'Keefe, 25, recorded two of the other suspects with his cell phone as they walked into the office dressed like telephone repairman and said they needed to fix problems with the phone system, according to an FBI affidavit.

A federal law enforcement official said one of the suspects was picked up in a car a couple of blocks away with a listening device that could pick up transmissions. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the information was not part of an FBI affidavit that described the circumstances of the case.

ACROSS THE NATION

Witness: Peterson bragged he could cover up murder

JOLIET, Ill. (AP)—An aunt of former Illinois police officer Drew Peterson's missing wife testified Tuesday that he once bragged he could kill someone and "make it look like an accident." Candace Aikin testified that Drew Peterson made the boast in front of her, Stacy Peterson and others at a family gathering in January 2007, months before Stacy disappeared. "I just remember him saying something like he could kill and make it look like an accident," Aikin said. She said Stacy Peterson heard that and replied, "Not with this chick you don't." Aikin also said Stacy and Drew Peterson often fought, and that her niece told her he would follow her from room to room while she was speaking on the phone.

Okla. man accused of killing wife, kidnapping girl

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—A woman found beaten to death in a motor home recently sought a protective order against her estranged husband, an ex-convict who was charged Tuesday with killing her and kidnapping her 7-year-old daughter. Comanche County prosecutors charged Lester William Hobbs, 46, with first-degree murder and kidnapping in the killing of Tonya Hobbs and disappearance of her daughter, Aja Daniell Johnson. Hobbs' body was discovered Sunday inside Lester Hobbs' motor home in Geronimo, a small town about 100 miles southwest of Oklahoma City. Lester Hobbs and the missing girl, who is not his biological daughter, were last seen by relatives Saturday evening. "He has gone from being a person of interest in this case to a criminal defendant," Comanche County District Attorney Fred Smith said.

231-mph NH wind gust is no longer world's fastest

CONCORD, N.H. (AP)—First the Old Man, now the Big Wind. New Hampshire's Mount Washington has lost its distinction as the site of the fastest wind gust ever recorded on Earth, officials at the Mount Washington Observatory said Tuesday. The concession came three days after the World Meteorological Organization posted a snippet on its Web site saying a panel of experts reviewing extreme weather and climate data turned up a 253 mph gust on Australia's Barrow Island during Cyclone Olivia in 1996. That tops the 231 mph record set atop Mount Washington on April 12, 1934. "It's obviously a big disappointment. Having the world record for over six decades was such a part of the soul of this organization and for fans of Mount Washington around the country," said Scot Henley, the observatory's executive director.

On behalf of Rota Treasure Island Corporation, I, Masahiro Watanabe is pleased to annou
ness concept of introducing a "Membership Resort System". There are so many ways to pro
campaigns, but at this time I decided to launch the first resort membership to the Japan M
being is that, the island of Rota does not have or has low marketing strategy to bring in th
of yet, in regards to a casino industry and are behind in developing a tourism destination

Also, instead of concentrating in promoting the Rota Casino Industry, My team and I are
and are searching ways on how to get more tourists not just in the Japan market, but aroun
Rota, Saipan & Tinian.

However, I am confident that in the very near future Rota will improve in every way and
develop and contribute to the Rota tourism industry and to the Commonwealth of the
Islands. I am looking for the shortest way in reaching our goal for the Rota tourism indu
members cooperate with our project plan we will achieve our goal in very short time perio

For the "Membership System" we avail special privileges to all enrolled members. Increa
means increasing the tourist market by bringing in more and more people into the Com
Northern Mariana Islands. This simple equation will be a major benefit to the local comm

Once we start our project, we believe that the entire tourism industry will improve and gr
fore, we are intending to launch our marketing strategy of our very own, "Membership
Japan, on the first week of February. I am confident that Rota will become one of the mo
and Casino destinations in the near future of the Japanese and Asian market.

Greetings & Hafa Adai!!

We wish to inform you that we are establishing a casino business on the island of Rota in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. I
passed numerous and severe inspections and have decided to acquire the first casino license that the government of the CNMI has approved. In cor
investment in the casino, we are creating a "Membership Resort System" which will enrich and promote the tourist industry, a vital industry for th
the development of the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.

Like any business we are motivated by a desire to create profit for investors. However we are also local residents of Rota and such are interested in pursin
objectives and building ties with the people and governments of the area. With this basic concept in place we are sure that we will succeed.

Rota is known as "Nature's Treasure Island", and is being hailed as a hidden resort. About 60 km West of Guam it is a land of sunshine; peaceful i
exceptional white sandy beaches and an emerald sea. We are confident that our expansion into the area will ensure an international position and in
oriented economy.

Rota is the southern most in the island chain of the Northern Mariana Islands, which includes Tinian, the capital Saipan, and 14 other islands. Th
Islands are currently a self-governing destination under the dominion of the United States. The rights of the people and peace of mind for tourists a
Constitution of the Untied States.

Japan and Korea have committed to increase basic airline traveling to the island of Saipan to attract tourist in having their vacations in the Commonv
ern Mariana Islands. Today, Guam receives approximately 1 million tourists per year and the capital island of Saipan attracts around 400 thousand

Rota is not only for tourism, but we are also striving to attract long-term businesses as well. This requires an area that provides peace of mind in a safe
ment; which Rota excels in providing.

We are working to conserve the exceptionional natural surroundings of Rota and are committed in working together to develop the public and privat
Our concept is to offer a safer more appealing resort life to travelers around the world. This is our goal in the area and we will strive to achieve our go
as excited about this project as we have become. Thank you for your interest in this project.

Rota Treasure Island Corporation, CNMI Corporation

Rota Resort, Japan Corporation

President MASAHIRO WATANAB

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL 233-0008

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ROTA RESORT JAPAN

ご挨拶

皆々様には益々とご清祥なる日々をお過ごしのことと慶祝至極に存じます。

この度、私共は北マリアナ連邦のロタ島においてのカジノ事業への参入をすることになりました。

このカジノ事業は北マリアナ連邦政府の憲法の下、公認されたものでもあります。おかげさまで、厳しい審査をクリアいたしまして、政府公認第1号のカジノライセンスを取得することが決定されました。

このカジノへの投資事業を記念しまして、今般ロタ島の基幹産業となる観光産業の充実と育成そして、ロタ島をはじめとする北マリアナ連邦の国家発展のための「会員制リゾート事業」を人数限定で実施する運びとなりました。

如何なる事業においても、利益追求をしていくことがファンダメンタルな原理ではありますが、其の課程において大切なことは事業主の基本的な概念でもあり、私共は、ロタ島の地域住民そして自治体との密接な連携をより強固にした国家発展の礎を構築していくと同時に相互の目的を共有した基本的な相互のコンセンサスを維持した中に総合的な我々の事業コンセプトを提唱していくものでもあります。

この基本的な概念がしいては我々の事業の成長、発展、成功に連結していくものと確信しております。

現在、ロタ島は"自然の宝島"と呼称され、隠されたリゾートとして脚光を浴びつつあります。隣接のグァム島の西方約60キロの地点に存在し燦々と太陽が輝き、周囲がエメラルド色の海原と真っ白な砂浜の海岸線に囲まれた環境抜群の平和な島です。我々の進出により、より堅固な観光立国としての国際的な地位を確保していくものと自負しております。

北マリアナ連邦の首都はサイパン島にあり、ロタ島、テニアン島を含めて14島から構成されています。アメリカ合衆国の自治領でもありますが、北マリアナ連邦には自治政府も存在しており、また同時に、住民の権利、又事業の権利などもアメリカの憲法で保障されているため安心、安全なリゾートプランであると考えております。

観光客の動因を計るために、日本、韓国また隣接のグァム島、サイパン島からの誘致を基本路線とした営業政策を構築して、観光立国としての足固めをしていく所存でもあります。現在、グァムには年間約100万人、サイパン島には年間約50万人の観光客が訪れており、同時に日本、韓国の航空会社もロタ島への定期的なフライトを計画しているようです。

ロタ島は単に観光客の誘致だけではなく、長期滞在を目的とした方々にも対応できるコンセプトを提唱又促進しているところでもあります。訪問者が求めるものは安心、安全の確保でもあり、その意味ではロタ島は最適な島と言えるでしょう。

我々は、この稀なる自然環境がいっぱいのロタ島の開発に関して、環境を破壊しない開発をしていくことを肝に銘じ、官民一体となった開発に取り組んでいく所存でございます。

我々の事業コンセプトに賛同される皆々様と共に、より安全で、確実なリゾートライフを提供するこのプロジェクトをアピールさせていただき、大きな目的に向かって邁進すべく今回のご案内とさせていただきます。

なにとぞ我々の事業コンセプトをご理解いただき、ご検討いただきたく存じます。

ロタリゾートジャパン株式会社

代表取締役 渡邊 昌宏

会員種類		レギュラー・シルバー・ゴールド・プラチナ・ブラック・VIPブラック *下記表参照
募集金額		1口 50万円
年会費		有料 (2年間無料 1口につき2年後から月々1千円)
入会金		1口につき5万円
預託金		1口につき45万円 (カジノオープンから3年)
クーポン		年間1口につき10万円相当のロタカジノプレー券
募集形態	縁故募集	1口 50万円 (預託金:45万円 入会金:5万円)
	1次募集	1口 100万円 (すべて入会金:返金なし)
	2次募集	1口 150万円 (すべて入会金:返金なし)

		クーポン	マリンスポーツ		ゴルフ (2名様)	ホテル		レンタカー		カジノ	その他	顧客郵送物
Regular レギュラー	1口～ 50万円～	3年	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	封筒仕様 *カード
Silver シルバー	2口～ 100万円～		30% OFF	10% OFF	1回	10% OFF		10% OFF		–		
Gold ゴールド	6口～ 300万円～	5年	50% OFF		3回	30% OFF				リムジン送迎 + VIPルーム 利用権	–	
Platinum プラチナ	10口～ 500万円～			20% OFF				20% OFF				BOX仕様 *カード *山崎ウイスキー *ロタクリスタル *無料往復航空券 (引換券)
Black ブラック	20口～ 1000万円～	7年	無料		5回	50% OFF					別途特典	
VIP Black VIPブラック	60口～ 3000万円～											

Asia

NKorea, SKorea exchange fire near disputed border

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea fired artillery and South Korea responded with warning shots along their disputed western sea border Wednesday, but there were no immediate reports of casualties and the North later said its barrage was part of a continuing military drill.

North Korea fired about 30 artillery rounds into the sea from its coast and the South immediately responded by firing 100 warning shots from a marine base on an island near the sea border, an officer at the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Seoul said.

He said no casualties or damage were immediately reported, and that the North's artillery fire landed in its own waters while the South fired into the air. The officer spoke on condition of anonymity because of department policy.

Later Wednesday, North Korea issued a statement saying it had fired artillery off its coast as part of an annual military drill and would continue to do so.

Such drills "will go on in the same waters in the future," the General Staff of the (North) Korean People's Army said in a statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency.

The exchange of fire came two days after the North designated two no-sail zones in the area, including some South Korean-held waters, through March 29.

South Korea's Defense Ministry sent the North's military a message expressing serious concern about the firing and saying it fostered "unnecessary tension" between the two sides.

It also urged the North to retract the no-sail zones, calling them a "grave provocation" and a violation of the Korean War armistice.

The western sea border—drawn by the American-led U.N. Command at the end of the 1950-53 Korean War—is a constant source of tension between the two Koreas, with the North insisting the line be moved further south.

Navy ships of the two Koreas fought a brief gunbattle in November that left one North Korean sailor dead and three others wounded. They engaged in similar bloody skirmishes in 1999 and 2002.

Pig heads left at Malaysian mosques amid tensions

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Worshippers found severed heads of pigs at two Malaysian mosques Wednesday following a spate of firebomb attacks on churches amid a dispute over the use of the word "Allah" by Christians, officials said.

It was the most serious incident to hit Islamic places of worship following vandalism and other assaults at 11 churches, a Sikh temple, a mosque and two Muslim prayer halls across the Muslim-majority country in the past three weeks. Pigs are considered unclean by Muslims.

The attacks followed outrage among Muslims over a Dec. 31 court verdict that allowed non-Muslims to use "Allah" as a translation for "God" in the Malay language. Many Malaysian Muslims believe the word should be exclusive to their religion, and that its use by others could confuse some Muslims and even lure them to convert.

Several men who went to a suburban mosque to perform morning prayers Wednesday were shocked to discover two bloodied pig heads wrapped in plastic bags in the mosque compound, said Zulkifli Mohamad, the top official at the Sri Sentosa Mosque on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia's largest city.

Two severed pig heads were also found at the Taman Dato Harun Mosque in a nearby district, said the mosque's prayer leader, Hazelaihi Abdullah.

"We feel this is an evil attempt by some people to aggravate tensions," Zulkifli told The Associated Press.

Sri Lanka: Initial results show president leads

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—Hundreds of Sri Lankan troops surrounded the hotel where the opposition candidate was holed up Wednesday as early returns from the nation's hard-fought presidential election gave the incumbent a commanding lead.

The military deployment reflected the tensions surrounding the race between President Mahinda Rajapaksa and his former army commander, Sarath Fonseka.

The two men are considered war heroes by the Sinhalese majority for leading the country to victory just eight months ago in its long civil war with the Tamil Tiger rebels, but a bitter falling out pushed Fonseka to quit, join the opposition and challenge the president.

Throughout the campaign, the opposition accused Rajapaksa of plotting to rig the vote and steal the election. Fonseka himself was unable to vote Tuesday because he was not registered. It was unclear if he had failed to register or if he tried and was left off the voter rolls.

Initial results Wednesday showed Rajapaksa leading with 3,563,634 votes compared to 2,209,214 for Fonseka, a 23 percentage point difference. There are some 14 million registered voters, and the turnout in Tuesday's polling was around 70 percent.

As those results were being announced, troops surrounded the Cinnamon Lake Hotel after about 400 people, including alleged army deserters, gathered inside with Fonseka, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Australian sentenced to death in Afghanistan

SYDNEY (AP)—An Australian security contractor has been sentenced to death in Afghanistan for fatally shooting an Afghan colleague, Australia's government said Wednesday. The contractor reportedly tried to blame the slaying on the Taliban. Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said his government was working hard to prevent the former Australian soldier from being executed, but conceded it may not succeed. Australia has around 1,500 active troops in Afghanistan battling Taliban insurgents and training Afghan security forces, and the death penalty case could raise tensions between the two countries.

China sentences 4 more to death over ethnic riots

BEIJING (AP)—China sentenced four more people to death for involvement in rioting last year in the restive far-western region of Xinjiang, the country's worst ethnic violence in decades, an official said Wednesday. The July 5 violence began as Uighurs, a Turkic-speaking minority ethnic group, protested the deaths of Uighur factory workers in an earlier brawl in southern China and then clashed with police in the Xinjiang regional capital of Urumqi. The crowd scattered throughout the city, attacking majority Han Chinese and burning cars. Nearly 200 people, mostly Hans, were killed, according to the government. Two days later, Uighurs were targeted in revenge attacks.

China, Dalai Lama's envoys no sign of compromise

BEIJING (AP)—Emissaries for the exiled Dalai Lama and China showed little public sign of compromise as they prepared Wednesday for their first talks in more than a year on restive Chinese-ruled Tibet. The Dalai Lama's two envoys will reopen the long-stalled negotiations with senior Communist Party officials on Saturday, the Tibetan government-in-exile said. Ahead of the meeting, the exiled government said it hoped Beijing would reconsider a proposal to give Tibet and other Tibetan communities greater autonomy. Chinese officials rejected that proposal at the last meeting 15 months ago.

World

Pilot in Beirut crash made 'fast and strange turn'

BEIRUT (AP)—The pilot of a doomed Ethiopian Airlines flight made a "fast and strange turn" minutes after takeoff from Beirut in a thunderstorm, Lebanon's transportation minister said Tuesday, revealing new clues about the plane's few minutes in flight.

The minister cautioned, however, against making any conclusions about the cause of the crash, saying it was far too early and investigators still need to find the black boxes.

All 90 people on board the plane bound for Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, were feared dead from the crash, which happened at around 2:30 a.m. Monday. A second day of rescue operations using sonar-equipped boats and divers turned up only a few body parts, extinguishing hope of finding any survivors.

Search teams scoured the sea floor trying to find the bulk of the wreckage as well as the black box and flight data recorder, which are critical to determining the cause of the crash.

Transportation Minister Ghazi Aridi revealed that the plane flew in the opposite direction from the path recommended by the control tower after taking off in stormy weather.

He said the pilot initially followed the tower's guidance, but then abruptly changed course and went in the opposite direction.

"They asked him to correct his path but he did a very fast and strange turn before disappearing completely from the radar," Aridi told The Associated Press.

"Nobody is saying the pilot is to blame for not heeding orders," Aridi said, adding: "There could have been many reasons for what happened. ... Only the black box can tell."

It was not clear why the pilot veered off the recommended path. Like most other airliners, the Boeing 737 is equipped with its own onboard weather radar, which the pilot may have used to avoid flying into thunderheads rather than following the flight tower's recommendation.

Haiti's children on their own on shattered streets

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—The children with no names lay mute in a corner of the General Hospital grounds Tuesday, three among thousands of boys and girls set adrift in the wake of Haiti's earthquake.

"Hi, Joe, how are you?" the American doctor tried, using a pet name the staff had given a boy of about 11.

There was no response.

"Joe," "Baby Sebastian" and the girl who didn't even have a nickname hadn't spoken or cried since they were brought in over the previous 48 hours—by neighbors, passers-by, no one knows who. "Sebastian," only a week old, was said to have been taken from the arms of his dead mother.

They're lucky: Haitian-born Dr. Wisdom Price and the staff were treating them for infections and other ailments. Hundreds of thousands of other hungry and thirsty children are scattered among Port-au-Prince's squatter camps of survivors, without protection against disease or child predators—often with nobody to care for them.

"There's an estimated 1 million unaccompanied or orphaned children or children who lost one parent," said Kate Conradt, a spokeswoman for the aid group Save the Children. "They are extremely vulnerable."

The U.N. children's agency, UNICEF, has established a special tent camp for girls and boys who, one way or another, were separated from their parents in the Jan. 12 quake, and who are in danger of falling prey to child traffickers and other abusers.

WORLD BRIEFS

New Honduran leader to take office, ending turmoil

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP)—A conservative rancher is being sworn in as Honduras' new president Wednesday, ending months of turmoil and the quest by ousted leader Manuel Zelaya to be restored to power after a coup that drew international condemnation. President-elect Porfirio Lobo said the first thing he would do after taking office was escort Zelaya from his refuge at the Brazilian Embassy to the airport, where the deposed leader planned to board a flight to the Dominican Republic and start a new life in exile. Zelaya, who was ousted in a dispute over changing the Honduran constitution, said he would leave the Central American country as a private citizen under a deal signed by Lobo and Dominican President Leonel Fernandez.

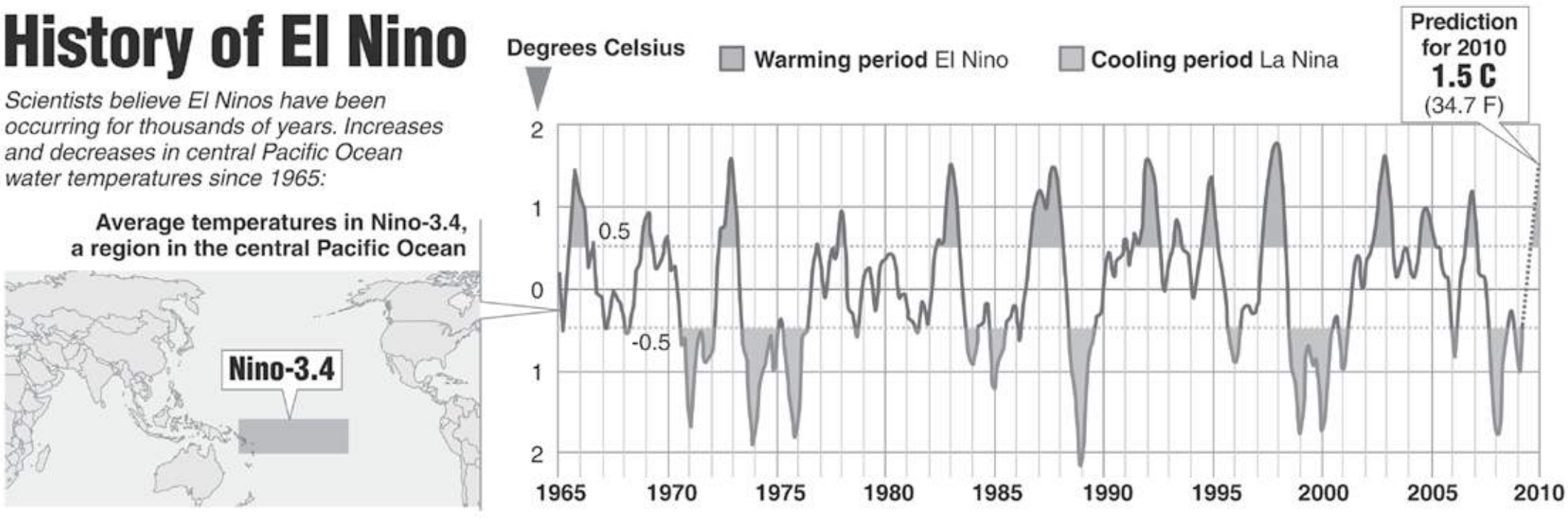
Peru slide kills tourist, guide near Machu Picchu

LIMA, Peru (AP)—A mudslide on the famed Inca trail to Machu Picchu killed an Argentine tourist and a Peruvian guide Tuesday, as authorities evacuated hundreds of tourists by helicopter from a flood zone where more than 1,500 others were still stranded. Cuzco government spokesman Hernet Moscoso said the Argentine, identified as Lucia Ramallo, 23, and the guide, Washington Huaraya, were in their tents when a slope gave way and their tents were crushed. Three other tourists were injured. Authorities closed the Inca trail, a popular tourist trek that follows a stone path built by the ancient civilization from their capital, Cuzco, to the Machu Picchu citadel.

Students protest removal of anti-Chavez channel

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Thousands of university students protested against President Hugo Chavez again Tuesday, accusing the socialist leader of forcing an opposition-allied TV channel off cable and satellite as a means of silencing his critics. The march by some 3,000 people was peaceful, unlike protests in several cities Monday that escalated into clashes among anti-Chavez factions, the president's supporters and police, leaving two youths dead in a western state. Demonstrators marched on Tuesday from Caracas' central plaza to the headquarters of the leading government-run television channel, where they condemned the removal of Radio Caracas Television Internacional, or RCTV, and accused state media of biased reporting. "Tell the truth," student leader Roderick Navarro told the channel's representatives. "We don't want this media outlet to continue dividing the people."

Environment



Green jobs grow slowly

By DEE DEPASS
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

MINNEAPOLIS—Last year, Randy Hagen, president of Solar Skies Mfg in Starbuck, Minn., laid off four of his 14 workers after orders stalled for the rooftop solar collectors he makes. Government rebates promised last year under the Obama administration's green jobs initiative never won final approval, so consumers didn't buy.

"Everyone who is considering buying a solar thermal system in Minnesota was hoping there may be some rebate stimulus dollars available to them," Hagen said. "(But the) proposed rebate for solar thermal has not yet been approved by the Department of Energy. ... This has literally halted solar thermal sales and has directly hurt our business. ... Yet everyone perceives that if you are in renewable energy you should be doing well."

The Obama administration's call for green jobs as an economic savior initially sparked hope for economic recovery. But the federal funds have only dribbled into the sector, held up by various shades of bureaucratic red tape and the lingering credit crisis. As a result, projects stalled and workers got pink slips as banks froze credit, venture capital firms slowed sector investments and government rebates snagged. By year-end, green-sector job freezes and losses far outweighed gains.

Among the victims: the plodding light-rail project in St. Paul, Minn.; the massive layoffs at Suzlon's wind turbine plant in Pipestone, Minn., and the deep job cuts at New Flyer's hybrid bus plant in St. Cloud, Minn., the site Vice President Joe Biden visited last year to herald the administration's green initiatives.

"The green economy has definitely been no stranger to the recession," said Joshua Low, spokesman for the Blue Green Alliance that links steelworkers with green commerce. "But we are building a lot of the right infrastructure and right policies right now. ... The (hope) is that the recovery acts as a major down payment on building a stronger green economy."

Last year's federal "cash for clunkers" program and rebates for energy-efficient window replacements boosted car and window sales and prompted worker callbacks at Andersen Windows and Doors. Thanks to state mandates, Xcel Energy-funded wind farms continue to sprout in Minnesota and Iowa.

Dan McElroy, commissioner for the Department of Employment and Economic Development, noted that $107 million in federal funds and $300 million in state funds drove water and sewage treatment projects last year. "That flowed very smoothly" creating a "significant number" of jobs, McElroy said. But funding for energy-related and rural broadband wireless projects that were slated to receive federal stimulus money has been slower to come. Most problems stemmed from the fact that the plans were so new that federal rules and processes had to be written from scratch, he said.

Still, environmentalists point to fresh federal stimulus plans and new state efforts that bode well for 2010. If successful, they could reignite hope and hiring and shift the green economy from neutral to forward.

But economists warn that rebates for building insulation, solar, wind and energy conservation projects won't be enough to pull down the nation's jobless rate. National unemployment remains stubbornly high at 10 percent, and economists forecast it won't drop to 8 percent until 2012 or 2013. They also predict Minnesota's rate, now 7.4 percent, will soon rise to 8 percent.

GLEN STUBBE/MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE/MCT
Workers at Cardinal Glass in Northfield, Minnesota, load sheets of glass onto a line where coatings were applied for energy efficiency, January 14, 2010. Cardinal just received a 7.7 million dollar tax credit under the stimulus plan to develop coatings for solar panels.

DO YOUR PART: GREEN TRAVEL

By TERRI BENNETT
THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER

Planning a getaway? Now is a good time to lock in the dates and destination for any travel plans this year. But planning a vacation is not the time to forget how to lessen your impact on our planet. Deciding where to go, where to stay, how to get there, and what to bring all provide opportunities to make smarter choices.

PICK THE PERFECT PLACE

Whether you decide to visit an environmentally sustainable winery in Napa Valley or check into a green certified ski lodge in Utah—the choices for eco-friendly destinations are endless. You can seek out spots that appeal to you and your family on websites like EcoTrotters.com. Or, tour companies like Intrepid Travel specifically coordinate eco-friendly excursions across the country. Don't forget the ultimate eco-destinations in America—our National Parks! There is one in nearly every state and are home to awe-inspiring views, free roaming wildlife, and endless things for the nature lover to do. Plus, they won't bust your budget!

STAY SMART

It's all the rage these days to go green and many hotels are either being built with the Earth in mind or are making retrofits which will conserve energy and water. Some hotel restaurants even feature all-organic menus. To find exactly what you're looking for, check out IStayGreen.org and EnvironmentallyFriendlyHotels.com. AAA also features green, eco-icons in their guidebooks that highlight hotels which are making eco-friendly strides.

GETTING THERE IS HALF THE FUN

It isn't just where you go and where you stay; it's also important how you get there. But, who really has the time to sift through mounds of research to figure out if flying, driving, or traveling by train is better for the planet? TripFootprint.com does the hard part for you. Enter in where you're headed, with how many people, and it'll scientifically determine which way will generate the smallest amount of pollution. Another option for those who may not have the most fuel-efficient ride is to park it and rent a hybrid. It cuts down on the wear and tear of your own car and you'll be creating fewer emissions on your trip.

A BETTER BAG

The best choice for luggage is to use the bags and suitcases you already have. But, if you need some new pieces there are plenty of eco-friendly options that are just a click away! Web sites such as Luggage.com have wide selections of eco-friendly luggage made by Patagonia, Eco-Traveler, Mountainsmith and more. Many are made with recycled materials or renewable resources and they are available in every price range.

Terri Bennett is an Earth scientist, syndicated columnist and mom; www.DoYourPart.com.

Life & Style

Poet wins UK's Costa Book of the Year prize

LONDON (AP)—Poet Christopher Reid was awarded Britain's Costa Book of the Year Award on Tuesday with a poetry collection written in tribute to his late wife.

Reid's "A Scattering"—inspired by his wife's death from cancer in 2005—beat four other finalists to the 30,000 pound ($48,426) prize, which aims to reward the most enjoyable book in the last year by writers based in the U.K. and Ireland.

"I'm delighted and bewildered to be the recipient of this important literary prize," the 60-year-old said as he accepted the award in central London. "The book itself was difficult to write ... It hasn't quietened the grief but it's helped me think more clearly."

Judge Josephine Hart described Reid's winning collection as "austere and beautiful and moving." She compared Reid's work to those by Thomas Hardy and W.B. Yeats, who were both inspired to write by personal tragedy.

"We feel that what Christopher Reid did was to take a personal tragedy and to make the emotion and the situation universal," she said. "It is bizarrely life-enhancing because it speaks of the triumph of love before and after death."

Hart said the judging panel arrived at the decision by a majority. The Book of the Year prize was chosen from five finalists, each already a winner of separate Costa genre awards—novel, first novel, poetry, biography and children's book. Each category winner receives 5,000 pounds ($8,000).

Reid's collection bested the bookies' favorite, "Brooklyn," a novel about a young Irishwoman emigrating to America in the 1950s by Irish author Colm Toibin. Graham Farmelo won the biography prize for "The Strangest Man," a life of physicist Paul Dirac. Raphael Selbourne won the first novel award for "Beauty," the story of a young Bangladeshi woman in Britain on the run from an arranged marriage, and U.S.-born writer Patrick Ness won the children's book award for "The Ask and the Answer."

The prizes—known until 2006 as the Whitbread Book Awards—were established in 1971. They were renamed in 2006 after sponsorship switched from retail and leisure group Whitbread to the Costa coffee shop chain. They are open to residents of Britain and the Republic of Ireland. Last year's Book of the Year was awarded to Sebastian Barry for his novel "The Secret Scripture."

Mamma Mia! ABBAWORLD theme park opens in London

LONDON (AP)—Is it possible to have too much ABBA?

Knowing me, knowing you, the answer is no.

The spangly Swedish quartet that gave the world "Waterloo" and "Dancing Queen" has sold 400 million records since its 1970s heyday and spawned the hugely successful stage and film musical "Mamma Mia!"

And now there's ABBAWORLD—a new museum-cum-theme park in London with enough music, mementoes and memory-lane appeal to satisfy even the most fervent ABBA fan.

ABBAWORLD's Swedish organizers promise the exhibition—which opens to the public on Wednesday—will be "a place for total interaction" with the band. The celebration kicks off Tuesday night with a party attended by band members Bjorn Ulvaeus and Anna-Frid "Frida" Lyngstad.

"It started with, 'How do we give the visitor a big hug in each room?'" said Magnus Danielsson, president of Touring Exhibitions, the company behind ABBAWORLD. "This is going to be more like going to 'Mamma Mia!' than going to an exhibition. We want people to sing and dance."

ABBA's music is inescapable throughout ABBAWORLD, from the exuberance of "Dancing Queen" through the melancholy of "Knowing Me, Knowing You" to the heartbreak of "The Winner Takes It All"—reminders that the band started off as two married couples and ended as two divorced ones.

The exhibition tells the band's story in 25 rooms spread over 30,000 square feet (2,800 sq. meters). Glass cases contain spangly costumes in silk, satin and spandex. Visitors can see recreations of Polar Studios, where the band recorded, and the seaside cabin near Stockholm where Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson composed the band's hits.

One corner holds the helicopter pictured on the cover of the 1976 album "Arrival." An ambitious interactive element lets visitors take quizzes, recreate the band's sound at a mixing desk, or dance and sing alongside an animated ABBA via "holographic video" technology. The gift shop features Abba T-shirts, teddy bears, jigsaw puzzles and figurines—along with CDs. An audioguide—narrated by Swedish actor Stellan Skarsgard, one of the stars of the film version of "Mamma Mia!"—traces ABBA's story, from the members' amateur teenage bands to stardom. The breakthrough came in 1974, when the band was the surprise winner of the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest with "Waterloo"—a song that brought ABBA's mix of bouncy pop melodies, multilayered harmonies and slightly silly lyrics to the world.

AP

Bjorn Ulvaeus, right, and Anni-Frid 'Frida' Synni Lyngstad, former members of the Swedish pop group ABBA, stand by caricature puppets used in a music video, at the AbbaWorld exhibition in Earls Court London, Tuesday, Jan 26, 2010.

The members of ABBA drifted apart in the 1980s and have vowed not to reunite.

Band members Andersson, Ulvaeus, Lyngstad and Agnetha Faltskog all support the project and have donated memorabilia and recorded interviews that are played on screens throughout the exhibition.

ABBAWORLD organizers hope to create a place of pilgrimage to match the Elvis shrine of Graceland or Liverpool's Beatles Story—albeit a moveable one. They plan to send the exhibition on tour after its London run—currently scheduled through March—and create new versions of it in Australia and New York by the end of the year.

The exhibition arose after plans for a permanent museum in Sweden bogged down.

Not bad for a band long considered uncool, even by Swedes.

"I was a big ABBA fan when I was a kid," Danielsson said. "But I got picked on when I changed schools, so I switched to hard rock."

The band's pop genius is now accepted—if not loved—by critics.

"I do understand that they made great pop music in the 1970s," said Neil McCormick, music critic for the Daily Telegraph. "But that much cheerfulness in one place and that much inanity I can do without.

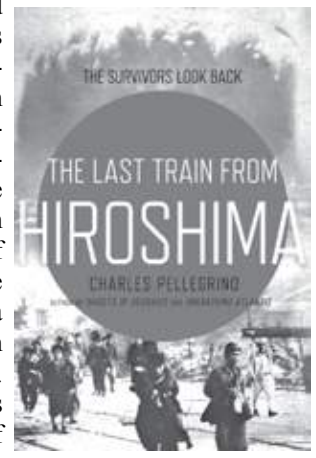
"They did one thing, they did it pretty well and they flogged it until you never need to hear it again."

Screaming horses and broken minds tell atomic bomb's story

By JEFFREY BURKE
(C) 2010, BLOOMBERG NEWS

The hand-drawn illustrations of origami cranes that open "The Last Train From Hiroshima" are the only truly pleasant thing the book offers.

I don't mean to say Charles Pellegrino has written poorly in this account of people affected by the two atomic bombs dropped on Japan in August 1945. The human suffering is as unavoidable as it is incalculable. It comes with large doses of science that can be heavy going. And of course, the knowledge that we live in an era of nuclear proliferation hangs over every page. That last point highlights the value of this sort of unpleasantness.



BLOOMBERG

"The Last Train From Hiroshima: The Survivors Look Back," by Charles Pellegrino, is a scientific and social account of the aftermath of the atomic bombing of the Japanese city.

Pellegrino sets out to capture experiences of dozens of people caught within the devastation zones of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. Using physics and forensic archaeology, he details the workings of the bombs and their many effects on living and inanimate things.

He follows several survivors closely during the aftermath, with special interest in those who lived through both attacks. Pellegrino says there were about 30 of those, of which one, an engineer named Tsutomu Yamaguchi, died earlier this month at age 93, according to his obituary in the New York Times.

For many, death came quickly. Pellegrino writes that a Mrs. Aoyama, who happened to be right below the detonation's Point Zero, had "one of the fastest deaths in all human history. Before a single nerve could begin to sense pain, she and her nerves ceased to be."

Others endured extensive burns, shrapnel-type injuries, radiation sickness. Some experienced suffering one can only hope was cushioned by shock, like the man heard making "a rhythmic clicking on the road surface as if he were dancing down the street with metal taps on his shoes," Pellegrino writes. "But he wore no shoes. In fact, his feet were gone and the bony stilts of two tibiae -- chipping and fracturing with each step against the pavement -- were the source of the tapping."

A young girl had this picture etched into memory: "the screams of the horses as they broke free from the stables and ran toward her with flames leaping from their backs."

Pellegrino, a scientific consultant on James Cameron's movie "Avatar" and his Titanic expeditions, has written books that dissect the myth and fact in subjects such as Pompeii and Atlantis. Here he is often, like a pathologist, coolly descriptive, yet he depicts with compassion some of the psychological damage. Besides survivor's guilt, some never forgave themselves for not helping others, even when they could have done little.

Many books have been written by and about the bombing victims since John Hersey's 1946 profile of six survivors in "Hiroshima." Pellegrino's effort may be the first to combine science and memories comprehensively. I wish, though, he had been more scientific in annotating his sources.

The notes at the book's end are unreferenced by page or anything else to the narrative. The "selected bibliography" lists almost exclusively scientific texts. Whence came all the human experiences and talk and thoughts he presents?

Pellegrino writes that he "benefited from conversations with experts and from encounters with eyewitness participants dating back three decades." The extent of the details and conversations recalled sometimes strains plausibility. Yet even if the writer stepped in now and then for narrative value, it's hard to see how he could possibly overstate such horrors.

The Last Train From Hiroshima: The Survivors Look Back *is published by Holt (367 pages, $27.50).*

NBC hopes to recover for Olympics

NEW YORK (AP)—NBC's Conan O'Brien-Jay Leno fiasco has been a monumental disaster for the network, both for its public image and bottom line, as it prepares to pay an embittered O'Brien and his staff an estimated $45 million to abandon "The Tonight Show."

Next up: the Winter Olympics.

A solid Olympics performance in February could go a long way toward rehabilitating the network. The past few weeks of bad publicity haven't helped, though, and NBC's struggling prime-time ratings hinder its abilities to promote the Vancouver games, which begin Feb. 12.

NBC also knows going in that it will lose millions of dollars on the Olympics but insists that no corners will be cut that viewers will be able to see.

"The squabbling over late night has really overshadowed anticipation for the games," said Shari Anne Brill, an analyst for the Madison Avenue firm Carat USA.

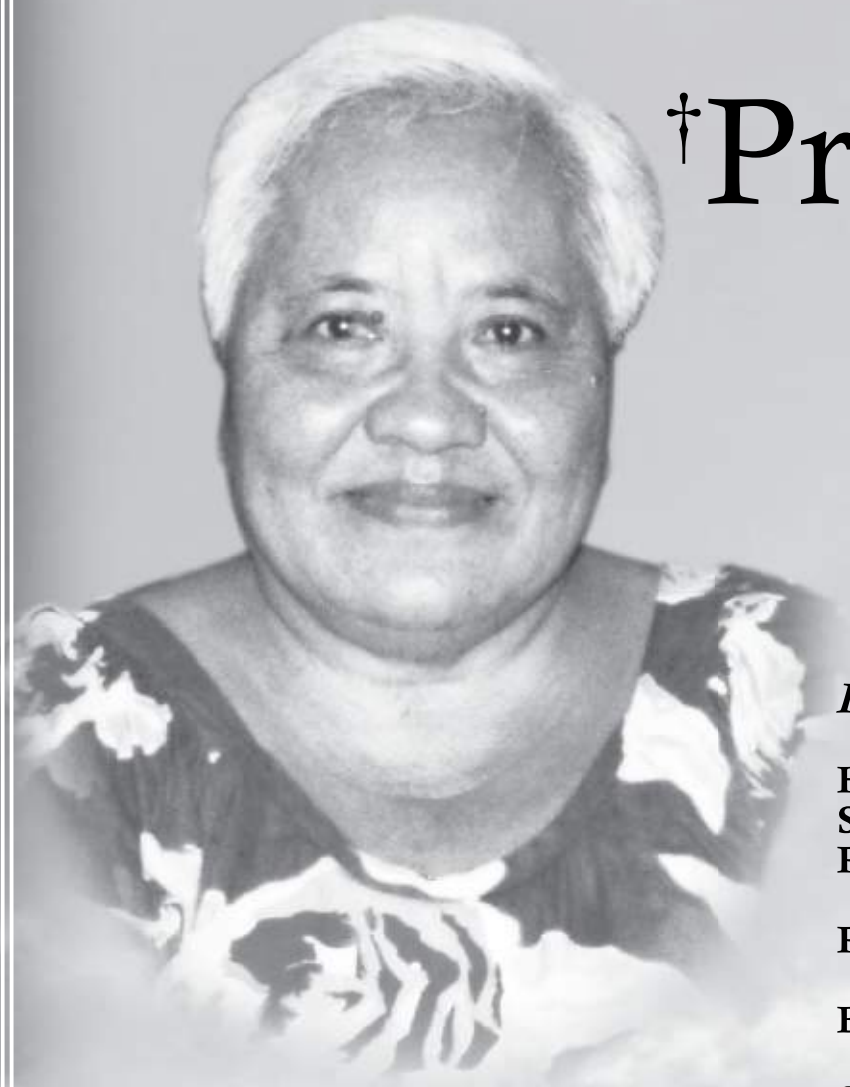
John Rash, an analyst for the Chicago ad firm Campbell & Mithune, said NBC's prime-time troubles hurt its ability to get people excited about the games and emboldened rival networks to program more aggressively against the Games.

But John Swallen, senior vice president of research for TNS Media Intelligencer, cautioned against connecting NBC's other problems with interest in the Olympics.

"Ultimately, it's the competition and the personalities of the athletes involved in the competition that makes the difference between a ratings bonanza and a ratings disaster," Swallen said. "And you can't predict that until the games unfold."

In a strange parallel, NBC is suffering now because of decisions made years ago. Rather than let O'Brien escape to a competitor in 2004, NBC executives promised him "The Tonight Show" five years later and then tried to keep both O'Brien and Leno—an effort that blew up in their faces.

In Celebration of her New Life



†Prudenciana Hocog Santos Agulto

Better known as Chana-Ignacio

Born on December 31, 1936
Passed away in the grace of our
Lord on January 21, 2010

In her new life, she now joins her:

Husband: Ignacio Palacios Agulto
Son: Ignacio Santos Agulto, Jr.
Parents: Vicente Torres Santos
Joaquina Hocog Santos
Parents In-Laws: Guillermo Concepcion Agulto
Martha Camacho Palacios
Brothers & Sisters In-Laws: Pedro H & Rita Santos
Francisco & Inocencia Santos
Sister & In-Law: Maria & Jose A. Deleon Guerrero
Brothers & Sisters In-Laws: Roman, Guillermo Jr., Daniel Agulto,
Maria & Steve Stoll, Dolores Agulto

Her memories will forever live in the hearts of her:

Children & Spouses: Maria J. S. Agulto (Akiy)
Asuncion (Connie) Agulto & Children
Florentina (Leng)/Juan Lizama & Children (Grandchildren)
Rainaldo (Dard)/Rita B. Agulto & Children (Grandchildren)
Leonora (Nora)/Jess Castro & Children
Violita (Viol)/Jack Diaz & Children
Guillermo (Gil) Agulto/Delcina Tudela & Children (Grandchildren)
William (Bill)/Candelaria K. Agulto & Children
Ernestina (Ern) Agulto & Children (Grandchildren)
Vicente (Ben)/Rita C. Agulto & Children
Brother: Mariano/Isabel Santos & Family
In-Laws: Francisco/Gorang Agulto, Margaret A. Retan, Jose/Carmen Agulto,
Merced/Gus Camacho, Jesus/Rita Agulto, Ana/Rick Taunton
Reared Children: Joaquina/Joaquin Aguon & Family
Rose Sharon Taimanao

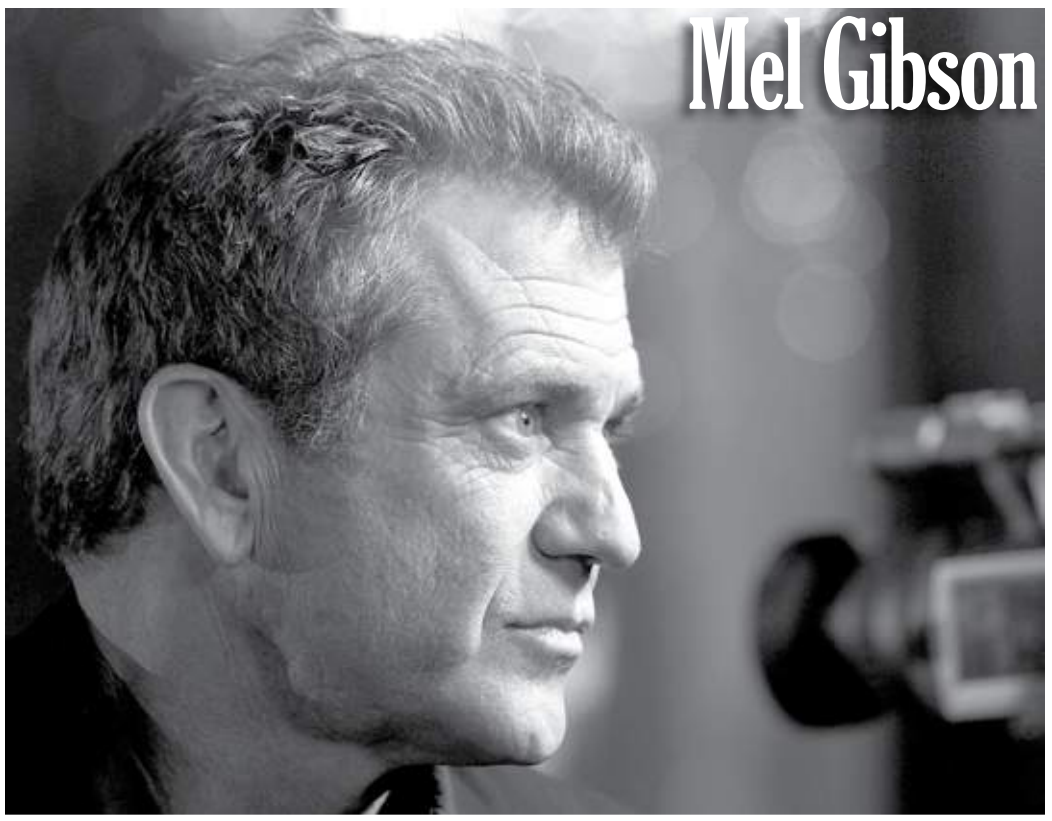
She is also survived by numerous Godchildren, Nieces, Nephews, & Friends.

Daily Mass is being offered at 6:00 a.m. at Mt. Carmel Cathedral, Chalan Kanoa.
Rosary is being prayed at Mt. Carmel Cathedral at 7:30 p.m.

On Friday, January 29, 2010, her remains will be escorted from the Borja Funeral Home at 7:00 a.m. to Mt. Carmel Cathedral. Responso service will be at 7:30 a.m. followed by Holy Rosary. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. followed immediately by interment services at Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Please join us in prayers. Thank you and Si Yu'us Ma'ase.

The Family



AP

Cast member Mel Gibson arrives at the premiere of "Edge of Darkness" in Los Angeles on Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2010.

Mel Gibson returns to screen after 71/2 years

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The last time Mel Gibson starred in a movie, he was grappling with alien invaders and a misplaced faith in the sci-fi thriller "Signs."

That was seven and a half years ago. In the intervening time, Gibson became a cultural firebrand, directing the controversial 2004 box-office hit "The Passion of the Christ" and the violent 2006 action epic, "Apocalypto."

He also became a cultural pariah in July 2006 when, after being pulled over in Malibu for speeding and driving under the influence, Gibson made obscene, anti-Semitic remarks to the arresting officer after being handcuffed and put inside a police car.

Gibson largely disappeared after the incident, but returns to theaters Friday with a new movie, "Edge of Darkness," a thriller about a Boston police detective seeking revenge for the murder of his 24-year-old daughter. Receiving lukewarm reviews so far, the movie is similar in tone with past blood-drenched Gibson films such as "Ransom" and the "Lethal Weapon" franchise.

"It was time," Gibson, 54, tells The Associated Press. "I felt like getting back in the saddle. I felt like I was getting stale about seven or eight years ago. Stepped back, did some things I wanted to do. Did a few things I didn't want to do. And then time to come back."

"I don't think Mel eases his way back into anything," says "Edge of Darkness" producer Graham King. "Sure, we discussed very early on, 'Is this the right role for him to come back in?' I think it is, and hopefully moviegoers will agree."

Will they? Hollywood.com box office analyst Paul Dergarabedian believes Gibson picked the right movie for his comeback.

"In revenge roles, Mel Gibson has few peers," Dergarabedian says. "If you've been away for awhile, it's smart to go back to what people are comfortable seeing you do."

Some, though, question whether Gibson's public standing hasn't been permanently damaged.

"I think that drunk-driving tirade confirmed a lot of people's suspicions about the kind of person Mel Gibson is," says Matthew Traub, managing director at Dan Klores Communications.

Traub, who specializes in crisis management public relations, believes people are willing to forgive celebrities for substance abuse or sexual indiscretion but draw the line at bigotry.

Publicist Michael Levine, whose agency has represented Bill Clinton and Michael Jackson among others, agrees.

"I think he's done," Levine says of Gibson's career prospects. "He'll work, he'll exist, but I think he's seared his obit for life."

Gibson defiantly rejects the notion that he's damaged goods.

"It's 30 years ago that I lost my own personal anonymity," Gibson said. "And it's 30 years ago that the public humiliation began. And sometimes it reaches a global level. And what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. And I'm telling you right now, I'm one strong motherf----- because I'm right back at you."

Gibson also insisted his past notoriety will not affect his ability to work with Hollywood studios in the future.

"What scandal?" he says. "That's mostly newspaper hype, OK?! I can get in with the studio, work with them, or work independently as I wish. And I'll go on as I always have."

Gibson has been tentatively making the rounds to promote his new movie. He attended the Golden Globes on Jan. 17 and good naturedly played along when host Ricky Gervais brought a pint of beer on stage and jokingly introduced Gibson, saying, "Honestly, I like a drink as much as the next man—unless the next man is Mel Gibson."

He was also seen cheerfully working the phone bank at last week's all-star "Hope for Haiti Now" telethon.

But there have been missteps, too. A brief TV interview with KTLA entertainment reporter Sam Rubin turned tense when Rubin told Gibson: "Some people will welcome you back, some people will say you should never come back."

Gibson, defensive, leaned forward and asked, "Why?" Rubin replied: "Because of what happened before." Gibson: "What happened before?" Rubin: "The remarks that were attributed to you." Gibson: "The remarks that were attributed to me that I didn't necessarily make." After the interview aired, Rubin questioned whether Gibson was ever truly sorry for the anti-Semitic remarks he made in 2006, particularly when he now contests the comments for which he widely apologized in the aftermath of his arrest.

While some may question Gibson's remorse, there's no doubting that people are still happy to make movies with him. Gibson just completed filming the offbeat comedy, "The Beaver," directed by longtime friend Jodie Foster, who plays Gibson's wife in the movie.

He has written a prison drama, "How I Spent My Summer Vacation" and will star in that movie later this year.

And he plans to direct Leonardo DiCaprio in a Viking epic that will employ Old Norse dialogue, a movie Gibson says will "put the V in Viking."

If that sounds a little out there, that's one reason why many are eager to welcome Gibson back in the fold.

"As a Jew, I have to say Mel Gibson's my favorite anti-Semite," says veteran film reporter Lewis Beale. "He's an incredibly talented guy both behind and in front of the camera."

Adds film historian David Thomson: "Gibson's not a tidy person. There's an authenticity to the unhinged characters he plays that sets him apart. Whether you like him or not, there's a daring there that makes him compelling."

Hopper's wife claims coercion in divorce filing

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Dennis Hopper's wife states in a court declaration that she believes the actor is divorcing her because of his declining health and influence from others.

Victoria Hopper wrote that her husband's medical and mental state have become unpredictable as he battles prostate cancer, according to the documents filed Monday in Los Angeles Superior Court.

The 42-year-old is seeking full custody of the couple's 6-year-old daughter. She is also asking a judge to allow Dennis Hopper supervised visits with his daughter for up to an hour per day, depending on his health. Her filing seeks strict guidelines, including a requirement that Hopper remove all guns from the family's house and refrain from smoking medicinal marijuana before the visits.

"I do not believe that petitioner is capable of taking care of himself or his legal and financial affairs," Victoria Hopper's declaration said. "Therefore, I do not believe Petitioner is capable of making sound decisions in the best interests of our daughter."

Hopper's manager, Sam Maydew, did not return repeated calls and e-mails seeking comment on Monday and Tuesday.

Martha Stewart is headed to Hallmark Channel

NEW YORK (AP)—Martha Stewart doesn't quite have her own television network like Oprah Winfrey, but the Hallmark Channel is giving the household style maven control over a chunk of its daytime lineup.

Stewart's weekday program, currently syndicated to various broadcast channels across the country, will move to the Hallmark Channel in September, the network and Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia Inc. announced on Tuesday.

"The Martha Stewart Show," starting its sixth season this fall, will air at 10 a.m. ET/PT each weekday. The show will be rerun each day at 4 p.m. and 5 p.m., and Stewart's production company will be responsible for 90 minutes of additional programming that will air following the first run of her show.

Stewart said the deal was in the works before Winfrey announced in November that she will leave her syndicated show in 2011 to concentrate on OWN: The Oprah Winfrey Network, her joint venture with Discovery Communications Inc.

"It just reinforced our desire to have a real home for our programming," Stewart said.

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Up In The Air
Friday 4:10 7:30 9:50
Saturday 1:20 4:10 7:30 9:50
Sunday 1:20 4:10 7:30
Mon thru Thurs 4:10 7:30
George Clooney, Vera Farmiga
Comedy Drama • Rated R
Synopsis
Juno's Jason Reitman heads into corporate America territory once again with this adaptation of Walter Kirn's novel Up in the Air for Montecito Pictures. The plot surrounds a human resource administrator (George Clooney) whose life up in the friendly skies becomes his only world as he works to reach his one-millionth frequent flyer mile.

The Tooth Fairy
Friday 4:00 7:00 9:45
Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:45
Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:00
Mon thru Thurs 4:00 7:00
Dwayne Johnson, Ashley Judd
Comedy Drama • Rated PG
Synopsis
20th Century Fox presents this family comedy following a star hockey player's (Dwayne Johnson) temporary transformation into a full-fledged tooth fairy as penalty for discouraging a young fan. Director Michael Lembeck (The Santa Clause 2 and 3) helms the family comedy, based on a screenplay by veteran comedic writers Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel, with additional writing provided by Joshua Sternin and Jeffrey Ventimilia. Ashley Judd and Julie Andrews co-star in the Blumhouse and Mayhem Pictures production.

I Love You, Goodbye
Friday 4:05 7:05 9:55
Saturday 1:05 4:05 7:05 9:55
Sunday 1:05 4:05 7:05
Mon thru Thurs 4:05 7:05
Derek Ramsay, Angelica Panganiban
Romance, Drama • Rated NR
Synopsis
Gary (Derek Ramsay) and Lizelle (Angelica Panganiban) are lovers for 4 years. One day in the search for a better life and future they decide to work together in a cruise ship and both attend an interview test on the ship. During the test both are required to jump into the sea with Lizelle getting scared and failing the test, making her ineligible to work on the cruise ship. Gary then proceeds to work on the cruise ship leaving Lizelle behind without saying goodbye to her. Gary's unexpected departure makes Lizelle really sad and this also marks the end of their relationship.

The Book of Eli
Friday 4:20 7:10 9:40
Saturday 1:30 4:20 7:10 9:40
Sunday 1:30 4:20 7:10
Mon thru Thurs 4:20 7:10
Denzel Washington, Gary Oldman
Action • Rated R

The Spy Next Door
Friday 4:30 7:20 9:35
Saturday 1:10 4:30 7:20 9:35
Sunday 1:10 4:30 7:20
Mon thru Thurs 4:30 7:20
Jackie Chan, George Lopez
Comedy • Rated PG

Alvin & The Chipmunks: The Sqeakquel
Friday 4:15 7:25 9:30
Saturday 1:15 4:15 7:25 9:30
Sunday 1:15 4:15 7:25
Mon thru Thurs 4:15 7:25
Justin Long, Matthew Gray Gubler
Children, Family • Rated PG

Avatar
Friday 3:55 6:55 10:00
Saturday 12:50 3:55 6:55 10:00
Sunday 12:50 3:55 6:55
Mon thru Thurs 3:55 6:55
Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana
Science Fiction • Rated PG 13

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AP

In this Jan. 14, 2010 file photo, actor Kiefer Sutherland attends the premiere screening for season eight of the television drama "24" in New York.

Kiefer Sutherland roped into alleged cattle scam

STOCKTON, Calif. (AP)—Actor Kiefer Sutherland was among cattle customers roped into an alleged scam that netted more than a million dollars.

Prosecutors say Michael Wayne Carr of Linden had agreements to buy steers in Mexico for his customers and sell them for profit in the United States. Carr allegedly took $869,000 from Sutherland, star of the Fox TV show "24," and $177,000 from a New Mexico couple.

Prosecutors say there's no record Carr ever bought the steers.

They also say Carr sold steers that didn't belong to him.

Carr is charged with 12 felonies, including grand theft, forgery and embezzlement. He was scheduled to be arraigned Monday, but a judge postponed it to Feb. 8 after his attorney was removed.

If convicted on all charges, he faces 18 years in prison.

'Avatar' passes 'Titanic' on worldwide chart

LOS ANGELES (AP)—James Cameron is king of the world again.

20th Century Fox said Tuesday that the director's sci-fi spectacle, "Avatar," has passed his shipwreck saga "Titanic" to become the highest-grossing film worldwide.

As of Monday, "Avatar" had brought in $1.859 billion at the box office, passing the $1.843 billion worldwide record set by 1997's "Titanic."

"Titanic" remains the highest-grossing film domestically at $600.8 million.

"Avatar" has been No. 1 at the box office for six straight weeks with a domestic total of $554.9 million. It shot down "The Dark Knight" on Saturday to become the second highest-grossing film domestically.

"Avatar" has also mined $1.3 billion in international ticket sales, smashing the $1.24 billion mark previously set by "Titanic."

20th Century Fox is owned by News Corp.

AP

Director James Cameron arrives at the Producers Guild of America Awards in Los Angeles on Sunday, Jan. 24, 2010.

Anne Hathaway set to announce Oscar nominations

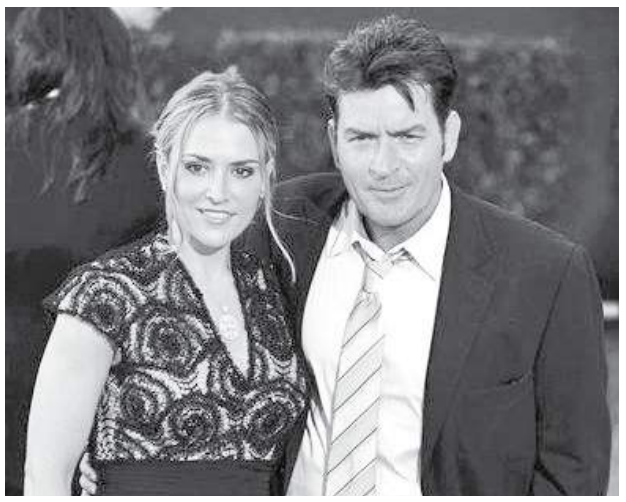
LOS ANGELES (AP)—Anne Hathaway will be among the first to learn who's up for an Oscar this year.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences says the 27-year-old actress will join academy president Tom Sherak to announce Academy Award nominees on Feb. 2.

Sherak and Hathaway will reveal nominations in 10 of the 24 categories at an early-morning news conference at the academy's Beverly Hills headquarters.

Hathaway was nominated for an Oscar last year for her leading role in "Rachel Getting Married." Her other credits include "The Devil Wears Prada" and "The Princess Diaries."

Charlie Sheen's wife out of hospital



AP

In this Sept. 20, 2009, file photo, actor Charlie Sheen, right, and his wife Brooke Mueller arrive at the 61st Primetime Emmy Awards in Los Angeles.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Charlie Sheen's wife, Brooke, has left a hospital after a week of treatment for an infection after oral surgery. Her lawyer, Yale Galanter, says she was released Monday night with orders to rest for the next week.

He says the star of the TV sitcom "Two And A Half Men" visited his wife in the hospital but now that she is out, the court order keeping them from contacting each other remains in full effect.

The Sheens have a Feb. 8 court date in Aspen in the aftermath of a domestic violence incident that brought police to their Colorado home on Christmas Day.

Galanter says they will ask for modification of the no-contact order. Sheen is also set for arraignment that day on domestic violence charges.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Cage's former Vegas home sells for nearly $5M

LAS VEGAS (AP)—A real estate broker says a Las Vegas mansion that belonged to Nicolas Cage before it was foreclosed on sold for nearly $5 million its first day on the market. Records show Cage owes millions of dollars to the IRS in unpaid taxes. The Oscar-winning actor has said he's had to sell numerous assets because of his finances. Kenneth Lowman, owner of Luxury Homes of Las Vegas, says the 14,300-square-foot, bank-owned home sold for close to the asking price of $4.95 million. Lowman says the sale is expected to close on Wednesday. The buyer wasn't identified. Cage sued his former business manager in October for $20 million, saying the man's advice led him toward ruin. A finance director in Middleton, R.I., said this month that Cage owed roughly $128,000 in unpaid taxes on a mansion there.

Boss exhibit to stay at Cleveland's rock hall

CLEVELAND (AP)—A Bruce Springsteen exhibit is sticking around for an encore at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. The Cleveland museum announced Tuesday that its exhibit on The Boss will remain there for the rest of 2010. The collection of Springsteen artifacts, handwritten lyrics and guitars had been scheduled to close this spring. "From Asbury Park to the Promised Land: The Life and Music of Bruce Springsteen" is one of the most extensive exhibits on a rock star ever presented at the hall. Springsteen, a 1999 hall of fame inductee, contributed many of his own items, including the guitar he holds on the cover of "Born to Run." Several new items have been added since the April opening, including Springsteen's first car and his 2009 Kennedy Center Honor and Golden Globe Award.

Jessica Simpson working to send shoes to Haiti

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Jessica Simpson is raising money to send shoes to earthquake victims in Haiti. Simpson has teamed up with the Nashville-based organization Soles4Souls. The charity has pledged to work with other aid agencies to give out one million pairs of shoes. Simpson is urging people to "do everything that we can for the victims in Haiti. Just five dollars will buy two people a pair of shoes." The charity says Haitian survivors need shoes to protect against broken glass, twisted metal and raw sewage. People can donate at http://www.50Kshoes.com .

Lyric Opera of Chicago announces 2010-11 season

CHICAGO (AP)—Lyric Opera of Chicago has scheduled a full season of eight productions for its 2010-11 season, but will cut the total number of performances to 68 for economic reasons. Lyric general director Bill Mason announced the cutback from this season's 77 performances Tuesday. He says ticket prices won't increase. The upcoming season begins Oct. 1 with a new production of Verdi's "Macbeth" directed by Barbara Gaines. Gaines is founder of the Chicago Shakespeare Theater. The upcoming season's other productions are: Bizet's "Carmen"; the Lyric premiere of Benjamin Britten's "A Midsummer Night's Dream"; Verdi's "A Masked Ball"; Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Mikado"; Puccini's "The Girl of the Golden West"; Wagner's "Lohengrin"; and a modern-dress version of Handel's "Hercules" directed by Peter Sellars.

Octuplets celebrate 1st birthday at Calif. home

LA HABRA, Calif. (AP)—The world's longest surviving octuplets are celebrating their first birthday at their California home. The eight babies were born a year ago Tuesday. Paparazzi mobbed mom Nadya Suleman's car when she brought them home from the hospital. Three of the octuplets peered out of the windows Tuesday at a handful of photographers. A woman brought eight balloons and a large bag of presents earlier in the day. Suleman's attorney, Jeff Czech, says she celebrated with a quiet party with her octuplets, her six older children, and other family members on Sunday. Czech says one of the octuplets is walking. He says Suleman, who is single and unemployed, feels her family is starting to outgrow the four-bedroom house in Orange County.

Woman doubts her ability to help longtime friend

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I am in my early 40s, and married with two daughters. I have a friend, "Sally," whom I have known since the third grade. We are like sisters.

Sally has been profoundly depressed for at least 15 years. She sees a therapist and a psychiatrist on a regular basis and is on medication.

My question, Abby, is what do you say to someone who calls at least once a week, for at least an hour, crying so hard I can barely understand her? She calls to tell me how sad she is and how she doesn't think anything in her life will improve. While I'm concerned for her and care about what happens to her, I don't feel I can give her any advice or guidance that her counselor/psychiatrist isn't able to give.

Short of listening and providing the proverbial shoulder to lean on, what more can I do? I feel I need to be there for her, but I also feel drained dry because this has been going on for several years. Any guidance you might offer would be greatly appreciated.

CONCERNED FRIEND IN FLORIDA

DEAR CONCERNED: You are a supportive friend, but when Sally calls crying so hard she can hardly talk, tell her that the person she needs to be talking to is her therapist. By allowing her to vent to you, you are preventing the therapist from evaluating her while she's in crisis and giving her the tools she needs to improve. Your friend may need to have her meds adjusted or changed, and seeing Sally while she is "at the bottom" could give her therapist valuable insights. If Sally isn't capable of placing the call to her therapist, offer to do it for her.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am a 14-year-old girl in eighth grade. I have plenty of friends, play the clarinet and piano, and am involved in school yearbook and theater, among other things. My problem is, I get sick a lot.

No one can figure out why I can't go two weeks without picking up a virus. Because of this I am gone from school quite often. I can handle the occasional teasing I get from other kids, and my teachers are helpful. It's the two school secretaries I have a problem with.

Once, when I left school during the day because I wasn't feeling well, one of them said to me: "You need to try to be at school more. I know it's hard, but you've got to try." Other things they have said lead me to believe they think I'm faking. Now they want a note from every doctor I see. I was gone a lot last year, but they didn't enforce this.

What is appropriate in responding to their "comments"? I'd like to ask, "Is that your opinion as a secretary?" or say, "I'm doing the best I can with my situation and you're not helping." Or, I could bore them with a detailed description of my medical history, or maybe complain to the principal. What do you suggest?

SICK OF IT IN IOWA

DEAR SICK OF IT: Your medical history is not the school secretaries' business, and you do not owe them any detailed descriptions of it. However, it's possible that the woman who advised you that you "needed to be at school more" was speaking out of concern, so try not to be defensive.

If a note from your doctor is required, you should produce one after every absence. And I recommend that you have your mother contact the principal if there are any questions about your medical status.

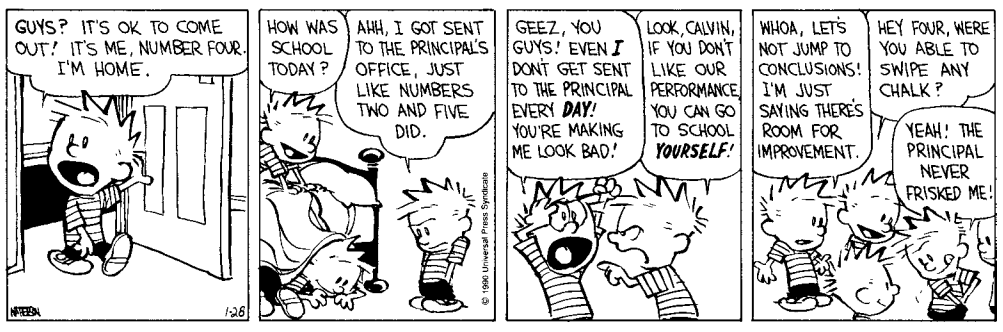
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


GUYS? IT'S OK TO COME OUT! IT'S ME, NUMBER FOUR. I'M HOME.
HOW WAS SCHOOL TODAY?
AHH, I GOT SENT TO THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE, JUST LIKE NUMBERS TWO AND FIVE DID.
GEEZ, YOU GUYS! EVEN I DON'T GET SENT TO THE PRINCIPAL EVERY DAY! YOU'RE MAKING ME LOOK BAD!
LOOK, CALVIN, IF YOU DON'T LIKE OUR PERFORMANCE, YOU CAN GO TO SCHOOL YOURSELF!
WHOA, LET'S NOT JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS! I'M JUST SAYING THERE'S ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT.
HEY FOUR, WERE YOU ABLE TO SWIPE ANY CHALK?
YEAH! THE PRINCIPAL NEVER FRISKED ME!
1-28
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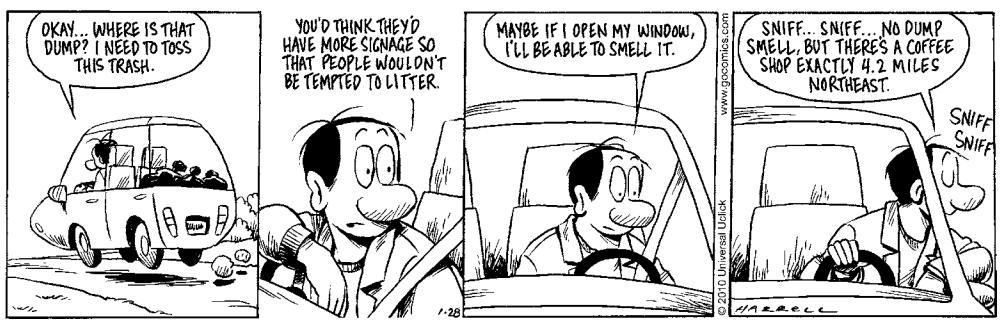
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


OKAY... WHERE IS THAT DUMP? I NEED TO TOSS THIS TRASH.
YOU'D THINK THEY'D HAVE MORE SIGNAGE SO THAT PEOPLE WOULDN'T BE TEMPTED TO LITTER.
MAYBE IF I OPEN MY WINDOW, I'LL BE ABLE TO SMELL IT.
SNIFF... SNIFF... NO DUMP SMELL, BUT THERE'S A COFFEE SHOP EXACTLY 4.2 MILES NORTHEAST.
SNIFF SNIFF
www.gocomics.com
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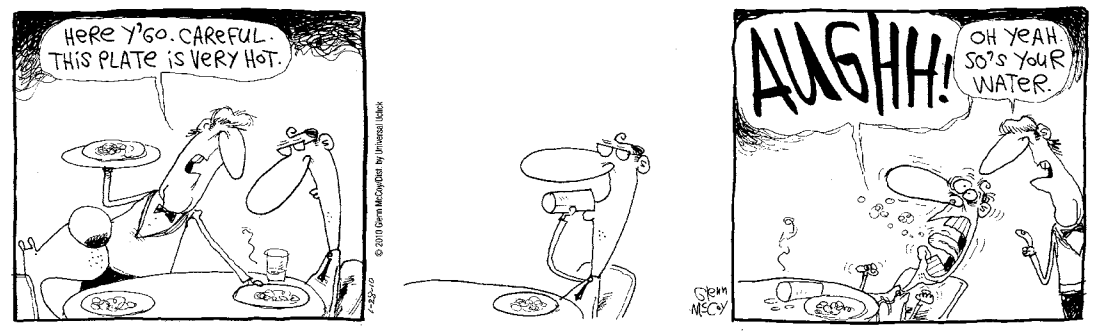
1-28
HARRELL

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


HERE Y'GO. CAREFUL. THIS PLATE IS VERY HOT.
AUGHH!
OH YEAH SO'S YOUR WATER.
© 2010 Glenn McCoy Dist. by Universal Uclick
Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

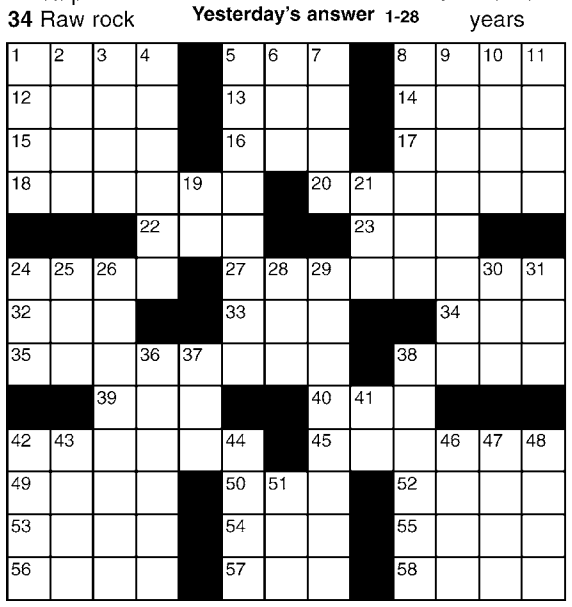
ACROSS
1 Santa's paperwork
5 Scenery chewer
8 Ostriches' relatives
12 Bloodhound's clue
13 Prima donna's problem
14 Year-end celebration
15 12-Across detector
16 Part of UCLA
17 Sicilian spouter
18 Classroom spinners
20 Low bow
22 Inventor Whitney
23 Profit
24 Athlete
27 Bit of marginalia
32 Black bird
33 Japanese pond carp
34 Raw rock
35 Pool variety
38 "Do — others ..."
39 Latin 101 word
40 Family
42 Some calisthenics
45 King who abdicated
49 Wife of Osiris
50 "— the fields we go"
52 Bellow
53 Arctic sheet
54 Larry's pal
55 Opposed
56 Be inclined (to)
57 Conclusion
58 Incubator sound

DOWN
1 Protracted
2 "American —"
3 Mediocre
4 Man with all the answers?
5 Finland's capital
6 Way back when
7 Rolling stone's lack
8 Grommet
9 Chromosomal change
10 Arm bone
11 Line of fashion?
19 Urban transport, maybe
21 Literary collection
24 Discordance
25 John's Yoko
26 Summons
28 Tic-tac-toe win
29 Toyed (with)
30 Scrap
31 Ultramodernist
36 Entertained
37 Upper surface
38 Open, as a gift
41 Freudian concept
42 Winnow
43 Gilligan's home
44 A handful
46 Blue-ribbon
47 Assess
48 Plumbing problem
51 A billion years

Solution time: 25 mins.

S	W	A	P	■	A	G	O	■	E	P	E	E
I	O	T	A	■	B	O	W	■	X	R	A	Y
P	R	O	P	O	S	A	L	■	P	O	S	E
S	E	P	A	L	■	■	S	L	O	P	E	S
■	■	■	C	E	S	S	■	A	S	H	■	■
E	S	P	Y	■	A	H	O	Y	■	E	B	B
W	A	R	■	P	R	O	P	S	■	C	I	A
E	G	O	■	R	I	C	E	■	M	Y	T	H
■	■	P	E	A	■	K	N	E	E	■	■	■
B	I	A	L	Y	S	■	■	S	T	A	S	H
A	N	N	O	■	P	R	O	P	E	R	T	Y
S	T	E	P	■	I	O	U	■	R	E	A	D
H	O	S	E	■	N	E	T	■	S	A	G	E

Yesterday's answer 1-28



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Chelsea Brummet, 23; Elijah Wood, 29; Nick Carter, 30; Alan Alda, 74

Happy Birthday: If you try to get things out of the way too fast, you will miss an important detail. A job opportunity will allow you to put your creative skills to work. The recognition you receive for your talent and insight will be worth your effort. Don't let emotional issues stop you from following the path that leads to a better future. Your numbers are 5, 13, 22, 27, 30, 33, 45

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Welcome the unexpected. You will be in your element, acting fast and taking care of every little thing that comes your way. The emotional turmoil created by someone close to you will be a telltale sign of what you should do next to make your personal life better. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Someone will interest you with a new hobby or activity. Tag along and you will discover you have lots in common. A potential to make a little money with this joint venture is apparent. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Take the initiative and deal with any pressing matters immediately. If someone is not pulling his or her weight, you may want to intervene. Be determined and strong about what you want to see happen. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Speak up and let your feelings, thoughts and intentions be known. If you don't say something now, it will be too late to make a difference later on. Let your emotions lead the way. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Don't be shy when it's so important to keep things out in the open. Talks will lead to change that you may not want but, once you get used to the alterations being made, you'll realize how beneficial this new set of circumstances is for you. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): A little pampering or self-improvement will go a long way for you. Someone you care about can share your enjoyment or you should meet late in the day for good food and conversation. Enjoy the moment. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Rid of yourself of any laziness. Procrastination will make you look bad and cause criticism. Open up to new trends and incorporate your old ideas with a different twist. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Observing the people around you will be eye-opening. You will discover something that helps you identify what you want to do in the future. You will be invigorated by what you contribute and the response you get from others. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Emotional matters will escalate if you try to run away or avoid a personal problem. Face the music and put what is bothering you in the past. Put your effort into work, not play, if you don't want to be pressured. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Take care of business. The demands being put on you emotionally will pose a greater problem the longer you wait. Money-making opportunities are looking good but check the deal out personally, rather than trusting someone else. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Don't make waves, start fights or antagonize someone who can influence your future. Your foggy outlook will cause you to misjudge a situation, leaving you in a vulnerable position. Assess things realistically and respond in a practical manner. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Initiate entertaining events or activities with friends or someone you love. A commitment made today may be based on a changing situation. Before you make a promise, consider the outcome from several different angles. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You have a strong sense of who you are and what you can do. You are sensitive, charming, thoughtful and sincere.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		7					2	
	3			2		6		1
2					6		4	
			8			7		
	2						6	
		5			1			
	9		7					4
6		8		5			1	
	7					5		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/28

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

2	5	1	8	9	7	4	3	6
7	9	6	2	4	3	1	5	8
3	4	8	6	5	1	7	2	9
1	2	9	7	3	6	5	8	4
5	8	3	1	2	4	6	9	7
6	7	4	5	8	9	3	1	2
8	1	2	4	7	5	9	6	3
9	6	7	3	1	8	2	4	5
4	3	5	9	6	2	8	7	1

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/27

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

BASEBALL BATS **Solution: 6 letters**

T	P	S	L	L	A	B	U	T	S	D	T	E	M	Y
G	C	O	P	M	U	H	T	I	E	P	L	A	R	P
N	(S)	A	L	N	W	H	M	D	C	D	L	O	W	O
I	(D)	T	T	E	A	P	N	T	D	L	K	A	H	S
W	(N)	A	I	N	A	U	S	A	E	C	E	P	T	T
S	(E)	G	D	C	O	L	P	T	I	K	R	N	U	E
B	H	L	T	R	K	C	U	H	A	A	C	O	C	W
T	E	R	N	O	I	T	O	M	C	N	T	I	O	H
F	E	D	E	N	I	A	R	T	I	S	C	O	R	A
A	S	M	I	T	Y	S	I	W	I	N	D	E	T	C
H	T	R	A	R	N	C	M	K	W	E	U	S	L	K
S	I	I	R	G	E	I	P	O	N	B	P	M	O	C
T	H	A	U	K	E	C	L	I	O	O	U	A	O	A
E	C	L	I	F	T	B	T	P	R	T	C	L	T	M
M	S	W	A	Y	D	R	U	T	S	G	H	K	C	S

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Aluminum, Ball, Beat, Blow, Bunt, Carry, Clench, Club, Contact, Cricket, Direct, Ends, Game, Grip, Handle, Hickory, Hits, Hold, Impact, Knock, Lift, Mallet, Motion, Paddle, Plate, Pole, Post, Practice, Rounded, Shaft, Slug, Smack, Smooth, Splinter, Sport, Stance, Stem, Stick, Stout, Stub, Sturdy, Swat, Sway, Swing, Tape, Thump, Tool, Train, Weight, Whack, Wind, Wooden

Yesterday's Answer: Plazas

SALE: The topics of "Wonderword for Kids" appeal to younger fans but the puzzle-difficulty matches what you've come to expect from Wonderword. For a limited time, the book is on sale for just $4 each (U.S. funds only), payable to Universal Uclick. Include $3 postage for the first book order, $1 p&h for each additional book. Send to Wonderword, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo. 64106 or call toll-free, 1-800-642-6480.

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Back to the future

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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In The Matter Of The Adoption Of:	]	FCD AD CIVIL ACTION NO. 10-0027
J. I. K. P., Minor Child, By:	]	
JOSEPH ITO PANGELINAN and MARIA FRICA TUDELA PANGELINAN, Petitioners.	]	NOTICE OF HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on February 11, 2010, at 1:30 p.m. in Courtroom 205A, before Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo.

Dated this 19th day of January, 2010.

/s/ Bernadita Sablan
Clerk of Court

ENTERTAINMENT

USSP-Thirsty Nights Pool Competition. FREE Entry-every Thurs. & Sun. New Yr. Dart Shoot Out. Free-Entry every Wed. Nights. Cash & prizes will be awarded to each winner.

TORRES BROTHER, LLC.
Joaquin DLG. Torres, Esq. (F0257)
Attorneys at Law
P.O. Box 501856, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel.: (670) 233-5503/4/6
Fax: (670) 233-5510

Attorneys for Petitioner,
Jeff Taylor

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE MITSUKO MIYAZATO SCHICK, Deceased.	]	CIVIL ACTION NO. 10-0008 NOTICE OF PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

NOTICE is hereby given that a Petitioner for Letters of Administration seeking appointment of JEFF TAYLOR as Administrator of the Estate of MITSUKO MIYAZATO SCHICK (Deceased), was filed in the above entitled Court. A hearing has been set for the above-entitled matter and will be held in Courtroom 202A of the Commonwealth Superior Court, located at the House of Justice Guma Hustisia-Imwal Aweewe, Susupe, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands at 1:30p.m. on February 23, 2010.

All persons having any objection to the petition, or having a claim against the Estate or against deceased, should file their claim with the Clerk of Court of the Commonwealth Superior Court within sixty (60) days after the first publication of this notice.

Dated this 27th day of January, 2010.

/s/ Clerk of Court

ENTERTAINMENT

USSP-LIVE RECORDING CD OFFER Every Mon. & Tues. Nights. Starting Jan 25, 2010 Cheap & Affordable price package. Call/Txt Rose @ 233-1984/286-7653 for more details

Atty. Rober Myers (F0365)
The Law Office of RH Myers Jr
PO box 5190 CHRB
Saipan, MP U.S.A. 96950
Tel.: 234-3184 ext 104
Fax: 234-3077
Email: Info@Lwyr4u.com
Web: Lwyr4u.com

Counsel for Plaintiff
NINO LUIS B. CAMACHO, JR.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NINO LUIS B. CAMACHO, JR. Plaintiff, vs. LUIS I. CAMACHO, Defendant.	]	CASE NO. 07-0460 FCD-PA NOTICE OF MOTION

DATE: February 4, 2010
Time: 1:30 P.M.
Judge: Hon. Kenneth L. Govendo

NOTICE is now given that Plaintiff, Nino Luis B. Camacho, Jr., (the "Plaintiff") will move through the undersigned counsel for an order allowing substitute service on the defendant, Luis I. Camacho, (the "Defendant") on 4th day of February, 2010 at 1:30 PM in the Commonwealth Superior Court in Guma Hustisia, Susupe, Saipan, MP. This motion is under Com. R. Civ. P.4.

Dated: **December 30, 2009.**

/s/ **Atty. Rober Myers, Jr.**
The Law Office of RH Myers Jr
Counsel for Plaintiff
NINO LUIS B. CAMACHO, JR.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Opening Date:	Wednesday, January 6, 2010	Closing Date:	Until Filled		
JVA NO.	**Position Title**	**Positions**	**Salary**	**Contract**	**Location**
10-006	Deputy Director for Water Wastewater	[One Position]	Negotiable; Ungraded	Two-year	Water Wastewater, Saipan
Opening Date:	Friday, January 28, 2010	**Closing Date:**	Friday, February 11, 2010		
JVA NO.	**Position Title**	**Positions**	**Salary**	**Contract**	**Location**
10-0014	Water Wastewater Operations Engineer	[One Position]	$55,000-$65.000	Two-year	Water Wastewater, Saipan

For more information about the position(s) being advertised, please stop by the Human Resources Office on the third floor of the Joeten Dandan Building.

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Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 6-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $27 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$15	$27
• 5-Liner	$24	$39
• 3-Liner with picture	$24	$42
• 5-Liner with picture	$36	$57

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

FUTURE

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Find today's solution in this section

Serena Williams survives after Venus' departure

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Defending champion Serena Williams survived against Victoria Azarenka in a classic comeback win Wednesday, preventing back-to-back upsets after her sister Venus lost to Li Na.

Venus Williams had a chance to serve for the match in the second set against Li but she went down in a flurry of errors.

Serena Williams lost the first set and was down two breaks of serve against Azarenka until she rallied to win five straight games to get herself back on track for a 4-6, 7-6 (4), 6-2 win.

"I'm surprised. I didn't expect to win when I was down 0-4. I was like, 'Oh well, at least I'm still in doubles,'" said Williams, who admitted she'd even started thinking about the trip home.

"I was actually thinking—it wasn't a champion's thought—if I lose today and I don't win in doubles, I guess I can catch a flight on Friday.

"That's not what you're supposed to think but that's what I was thinking."

Azarenka wilted in their quarterfinal here last year, retiring in the second set with a virus after taking the first set off Serena Williams.

This time, the 20-year-old Belorussian was undone by a trademark comeback from Williams, who is the only player to save match points on the way to three Grand Slam titles. She did it at Wimbledon last year and at the 2003 and 2005 Australian Opens.

The 11-time Grand Slam champion has rallied when the odds are seemingly stacked against her, which has helped Williams win the Australian title each odd-numbered year since beating sister Venus in the 2003 final.

Now, instead of the projected sisters semifinal on the top half of the draw, it will be: Serena Williams vs. No. 16 Li of China. Serena's close finish was only 18 hours after a knee problem forced men's defending champion Rafael Nadal to quit his quarterfinal against Andy Murray while he trailed in the third set.

Li rallied from a set and a break down, breaking Venus Williams' serve to stay in the match in the second set, on the way to her 2-6, 7-6 (4), 7-5 triumph.

Azarenka looked as if she'd continue the Williams family woes. She broke the four-time Australian Open champion Serena in the opening game and then, after fending off three break points, held her own opening serve in a game that lasted more than 15 minutes and went to deuce nine times.

It was mostly one-way until she led 6-4, 4-0, then Williams started her comeback—winning five straight games and then getting on top again at the end of the tiebreaker.

Williams dominated the third set, converting both her breakpoint chances.

That's more than can be said of her older sister, a seven-time Grand Slam champion, who made a pile of unforced errors against a player who had never gone past the quarterfinals at a major.

Li's progress to the semifinals gave China two players into the last four of a tennis major for the first time.

"Best day of my whole life," Li said, grinning widely.

Zheng Jie will play a semifinal against former No. 1-ranked Justine Henin in the other half of the draw.

"Good for both players. Also good for China's tennis," Li said. "Also good for the fans. Thank you."

It was another disappointing exit for the 29-year-old Williams, who bristled at the suggestion that her only chance at another major was at Wimbledon.

Venus Williams has won five Grand Slam singles crowns on grass and been in another three finals at Wimbledon. She hasn't won a major on any other surface since she successfully defended her U.S. Open title in 2001. That doesn't stop her from trying.

"Well, like I said so many times before, if I would have, kind of gotten involved in what people said I would have never left the ghetto," Williams said. "So here I am playing pro tennis, playing well. The sky's the limit in this sport. I'm looking for that."

AP

Li Na of China returns to Venus Williams of the United States on her way to winning their Women's singles quarterfinal match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Wednesday Jan. 27, 2010.

The experts picked a Williams sisters semifinal. And when Venus was serving for the match at 5-4 in the second set, it still seemed likely.

But Li rallied, breaking Williams in that game and eventually forcing and then dominating a tiebreaker.

Williams held to open the third set, which then featured six consecutive service breaks until Li held to even it at 4-4. She broke Williams and then had her own chance to serve for the match, but didn't win a point in that game.

Williams returned the favor, losing four straight points on her serve to give Li a second chance to serve it out from 6-5.

Li, who had never gone beyond the quarterfinals at a Grand Slam, needed three match points, eventually converting it with consecutive forehand winners down the line.

The match featured a combined 110 unforced errors, Williams committing 53 of those. Williams had 11 double-faults—five in the third set—against Li's five in the match.

The pair hit 27 winners each.

Li survived two match points in her third-round win over Hungary's Agnes Szavay, now she's gone further than ever at a major and is talking about a top 10 ranking.

She said she might even celebrate with a beer.

"In China we say if you have tough time and then you return back, maybe have good luck for after," she said. "So I still believe that, yeah."

Li beat Venus in the quarterfinals of the Beijing Olympics in their only previous meeting but was on the back foot early this time.

Williams started convincingly, leading 4-0 in the first, before Li held and then broke Williams.

Williams won the next four games, clinching the first set and going up a break in the second, before Li rallied again.

Being so close to defeat stirred Li into action.

"I just played my tennis. I know I lose the first set but thanks for the coach, never give up," she said.

"He was teaching me a lot. I know sometimes talk too much but nice guy," she added, laughing.

Nadal, who won last year's final in five sets over Roger Federer, was behind 6-3, 7-6 (2), 3-0 when he withdrew Tuesday night against No. 5 Murray because he didn't want to risk long-term damage to his knee.

Andy Roddick also needed a medical timeout—after the first set of his earlier match against No. 14 Marin Cilic. His sore right shoulder was making his fingers numb.

Cilic eventually advanced 7-6 (4), 6-3, 3-6, 2-6, 6-3.

Federer is still in the equation at Melbourne Park, where he plays Nikolay Davydenko in the quarterfinals Wednesday. Novak Djokovic and Jo-Wilfried Tsonga meet in a rematch of the 2008 final.

Garland agrees to $5.3 million deal with Padres

SAN DIEGO (AP)—The next stop on Jon Garland's tour of Southern California's big league teams is San Diego and spacious Petco Park.

The durable right-hander agreed to a $5.3 million, one-year contract with the San Diego Padres on Tuesday.

"A place like San Diego was so appealing to me because it's one of the few remaining parks that is a pitcher's park, and the San Diego Padres are building a team around that park, with speed and good pitching," Garland said during a conference call Tuesday evening. "It's a place that I saw myself being."

Garland, who grew up in the L.A. area, saw his first NL action in 2009, splitting the season between the Arizona Diamondbacks and Los Angeles Dodgers. He was a combined 11-13 with a 4.01 ERA.

He spent his first eight seasons with the Chicago White Sox, helping them win the 2005 World Series. He was traded to the Angels in November 2007 and signed as a free agent with Arizona before the 2009 season. He was traded to the Dodgers on Aug. 31.

The Padres had pursued Garland most of the offseason, and the deal came together in the last week.

"With the opportunity to come down to San Diego, it's a place where, early in my career, being from Southern California, I thought it would be fantastic to play there," Garland said. "I wasn't sure if that ever was going to happen, it's something that came about and I jumped on it."

Garland will figure prominently in San Diego's rotation, along with Chris Young and Kevin Correia. He's made more than 30 starts in each of his last eight seasons, and pitched more than 200 innings in five of those seasons. During that span, he never pitched fewer than 191 2-3 innings.

"He's a guy who's durable, who's going to make his starts, who's going to be steady, who's going to give you a professional effort every time out," manager Bud Black said. "We think that Jon, in our rotation, just makes us a better club. He's a guy that takes the ball and pitches well from April to September. He's a guy that you can count on, which says a lot, for me."

General manager Jed Hoyer called the 30-year-old Garland "a young veteran, if you will," who is capable of providing "high-quality innings."

"When you look at Jon's track record, he's really always pitched in hitter's parks, except for really the last month of the season with the Dodgers," Hoyer said. "So him coming to the Padres and being able to pitch in Petco, we think can really help him a great deal. I think he'll thrive here."

Garland will make $4.7 million this season, with a mutual option for $6.75 million in 2011. If the Padres decline, he gets a $600,000 buyout. If Garland rejects it, the buyout is $300,000.

The Padres finished fourth in the NL West after going 37-25 down the stretch.

Garland likes their chances.

"When you look at this team on paper, I don't think there's any person who's going to give us a chance," Garland said. "To me that's a very, very scary combination, because when you put a bunch of young guys on the field that are hungry to play, that are hungry to show the world what they're capable of doing, and you have teams come in and kind of sit back, we can creep up on people. Facing this team last year on numerous occasions, they're not just going to roll over. They come to play, they come to win. That's pretty much all you can ask.

"If people look past this team, they're in for a big surprise."

Lakers beat Wizards after White House visit

WASHINGTON (AP)—There's nothing like a trip to 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. to lift the spirits during the dog days of an NBA season.

That's a privilege given only to the reigning champions, and the Los Angeles Lakers had their moment with President Barack Obama on Monday. It was a good substitute for a ho-hum January practice, and they promptly lifted their road doldrums Tuesday night with a 115-103 win over the Washington Wizards.

"Our overall energy was a lot better," said Lamar Odom, who scored 15 points on 7-for-10 shooting. "The trip to the White House gave us a little energy. We want to go back."

Odom said before the game that the champs had become "a little too overconfident," but it didn't show as he and teammates chased down loose balls and kept their hands all over the passing lanes. The Lakers showed the troubled Wizards what hustling, focused, never-let-up basketball is all about, shooting 59 percent and forcing six turnovers during a crucial second-quarter run.

"Offensive rebounds, getting loose balls, turning teams over," Kobe Bryant said. "Especially when you play on the road, that's some of things you need to have happen."

Bryant and Pau Gasol scored 26 points apiece for the Lakers, who had lost six of their previous eight road games and pulled to a 2-2 record midway through their current eight-game swing.

Antawn Jamison, playing on a sprained right foot, scored 27 points to lead the Wizards, who lost the last four games of a six-game homestand. The game came one day after guard Javaris Crittenton received probation after pleading guilty to a misdemeanor gun charge, the latest fallout from last month's locker room confrontation between Crittenton and Gilbert Arenas.

"I think we're all pretty much numb to the whole thing right now," coach Flip Saunders said.

The Lakers took over a tight game with a 20-7 half-ending run that included Wizards turnovers of every kind. Shannon Brown stole the ball from DeShawn Stevenson, Andray Blatche traveled, Mike Miller and Mike James threw bad passes, the shot clock expired, and Brendan Haywood committed an offensive foul with 2.5 seconds left in the half.

Brown, meanwhile, used the quarter to tune up for the slam dunk contest at next month's All-Star weekend. He put home an alley-oop, threw down a flying monster to end a fast break and stunned the Wizards by dunking a missed free throw by teammate Andrew Bynum. Derek Fisher's wide-open 3-pointer gave the Lakers a 60-44 lead at the break.

"Against a team like that, that's all is takes is a quick three, four, five minutes where you're not playing your best," Haywood said. "They take advantage of that, and they basically cruise all game off that little 15-point cushion."

The Wizards stayed within shouting distance in the second half, mostly keeping the deficit between 10 and 15 points. Jamison cut it to nine, 91-82, by making a free throw with 8:58 left in the game, but the Lakers responded with a 12-2 run that included four points from Gasol, a 3-pointer from Brown and a 3-pointer and another jumper from Jordan Farmar.

Washington shot 51 percent and outrebounded Los Angeles 41-32.

"If we had played as hard in the last few of our games as we did tonight, we would have had a good homestand," Saunders said.

Knicks 132, Timberwolves 105

At New York, David Lee had 28 points and 10 rebounds as New York rebounded from a lopsided beating by administering one against Minnesota.

Al Harrington scored 26 and Wilson Chandler had 20 despite a strained left groin for the Knicks, who were dealt the worst home loss in franchise history when Dallas beat them 128-78 on Sunday. New York was on the other end this time, scoring the first 15 points and leading by as many as 36.

New York had its highest point total of the season and ended a two-game losing streak, becoming the third team in NBA history to win by 20 or more the game after losing by 50.

Corey Brewer made 9 of 10 shots for 22 points in yet another lopsided defeat for the Timberwolves.

AP

Los Angeles Lakers forward Pau Gasol (16), of Spain, goes to the basket against Washington Wizards forward Andray Blatche, left, Antawn Jamison (4) and Mike Miller, top right, during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2010, in Washington.

Mavericks 108, Bucks 107

At Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki scored 28 points and Jason Terry added 21 as Dallas Mavericks held on late to beat Milwaukee.

Carlos Delfino missed a running 10-footer in the lane before the buzzer.

Andrew Bogut hit his first nine shots from the floor and scored a career-high 32 points on 13 of 14 shooting. Delfino chipped in with 22 points for the Bucks, who dropped to 5-18 on the road.

Two days after beating the New York Knicks 128-78 for the largest win in franchise history, the Mavericks tied an NBA record with their 10th consecutive victory in a one-point game. The St. Louis Hawks also won 10 straight one-point games from 1959-1960.

Bobcats 114, Suns 109

At Phoenix, Stephen Jackson scored 30 points as Charlotte scored nine of the first 11 points in overtime to beat Phoenix.

Jackson, who leveled the game at 98-98 on a 3-pointer with 19.9 seconds remaining, hit a 20-foot jump shot on the Bobcats' first possession of overtime to give Charlotte only its second lead of the game.

Raymond Felton had six of his 17 points in overtime as Charlotte stretched its lead to six. The Bobcats broke a three-game losing streak.

Steve Nash had 23 points and nine assists for the Suns, who have lost seven of their last nine.

Former Suns player Boris Diaw had 24 points and Gerald Wallace had 21.

Kings 99, Warriors 96

At Sacramento, California, Beno Udrih scored 24 points and Tyreke Evans had 23 to help Sacramento snap a seven-game losing streak with a win over Golden State.

Spencer Hawes had 18 points and 13 rebounds for the Kings. In a rare role with significant minutes, Scot May had seven points and 11 rebounds.

Stephen Curry had 27 points, nine rebounds and six assists for the Warriors. Cartier Martin scored 20 points and Corey Maggette added 19 points for Golden State, which shot 32 percent.

Saints' Evans has climbed from D-2 to top of NFL

METAIRIE, La. (AP)—When All-Pro Jahri Evans was an NFL rookie, he traveled to rural Pennsylvania to watch a Division II football game.

Bloomsburg at Mansfield.

Few appreciated that more than Bloomsburg coach Danny Hale, who took a chance on Evans out of high school without Evans having played a down during his senior year.

"I think it's something special for a guy down there in New Orleans who's willing to give up that weekend to fly up here to upstate Pennsylvania in the cold and wet," Hale said. "He really is a special guy—pretty humble, a hard worker and a great kid. When he was here it was five years of just doing what you tell him."

Since being drafted out of Bloomsburg in the fourth round in 2006, Evans has started every game at right guard for the New Orleans Saints. Had he not been playing so well lately, he might be suiting up for his first Pro Bowl this weekend. Instead, he'll take the field for the Super Bowl a week later.

"It's not a bad reason to miss the Pro Bowl," Evans said, chuckling.

During last weekend's NFC championship game, Evans helped clear a path on both of running back Pierre Thomas' touchdowns in the Saints' 31-28 triumph over Minnesota.

On Thomas' 38-yard score on a screen, the 6-foot-4, 318-pound Evans motored up field to cut off defensive back Benny Sapp's path to the ball. Sapp fell as he tried to avoid running into Evans, who has been known to put defenders on their backs. Evans then quickly pivoted right and delivered a glancing blow to linebacker Chad Greenway, who was trying to track down Thomas from behind.

Back in Bloomsburg, Hale was watching, delighted but not surprised.

"I'm seeing the same things he's doing at the NFL that he did at this level," Hale said by phone Tuesday. "He doesn't even have to make contact. He's there and (defenders) are going to vacate. He's hustling to get downfield and get another block."

Thomas scored on a 9-yard run in the second half by cutting back behind Evans' block on defensive tackle Pat Williams, whom Evans shoved several yards off the line of scrimmage before knocking him down.

In Philadelphia, former Bloomsburg running back Jamar Brittingham had an idea of what Thomas saw on that run.

"I can remember running to his side and there would be a humongous hole," said Brittingham, who rushed for 2,260 yards and 32 touchdowns in 2005, with Evans blocking for him.

Evans had hopes of playing major college football when he was a high school junior in Philadelphia. Letters arrived from Maryland, Virginia Tech, Vanderbilt and others. Then while playing pickup basketball the following summer, he broke his leg and could not play football as a senior.

Bloomsburg found out about him while recruiting his Frankford High School teammate, Sean Williams, who persuaded coaches to meet Evans.

"He just came off extremely well in the personal visit—a very good high school student, top 10 percent in his class," Hale recalled. "We just took a chance."

Evans got a partial football scholarship and also qualified for an academic scholarship, without which he might not have been able to afford Bloomsburg. Evans credited his single mother, Katreen, for that.

"She's a big reason why I'm here today," he said. "She was very involved in school."

Evans redshirted his freshman year to build strength. Hale said he was one of his best linemen by his sophomore year, rotating at both guard and tackle spots before taking over at left tackle.

He wore No. 73, as he does now, and both Hale and Brittingham recall fans at Bloomsburg talking about watching for him.

"He was just a dominating force and every game there was something exciting you were going to see from Jahri," Brittingham said. "A lot of times what people would see is a big guy running down the field hitting a guy so hard that the first thing that would hit the ground was his head."

Pro scouts were interested, but had reservations because Evans had not been blocking top college defenders.

"I knew there were going to be questions coming out, but it just came from not knowing as much or seeing the film and the stuff you see on D-1 guys," Evans said.

However, Saints scout Jim Monos had gone to Bloomsburg and his father, Jim Monos Sr., was an offensive coordinator there and had worked with Evans. That connection gave the Saints the confidence to use a mid-round draft pick on him.

"A lot of guys know now that there's players all over the country, no matter what college they go to," Evans said.

When Evans was named All-Pro, he texted and called former coaches back in Pennsylvania to thank them.

"People at Bloomsburg are definitely happy and proud," Evans said. "It's not every day that somebody from that area makes it this far in the NFL."

10 fighters to debut in Fearless

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Ten combatants will debut in the octagon cage when Trench Tech's Rites of Passage 8: Fearless is staged on Feb. 12 at the Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort.

The list include Marianas Elite's John "ROC Juan" Deleon Guerrero, Tinian's Craig Borja, Jerry Mundo and Carl Cepeda, Guam's Frank Benavente and Mike Taitano, Saipan's Ben Duenas, Derrick Manglona, Josh Cruz, Jason Teregeyo, and Josh Martin,

All these 10 first time fighters will be featured in the supporting bouts of Trench Tech's initial offering of the year. Fearless' triple main event will have Korean fighters dueling Trench Tech bets.

Deleon Guerrero will debut in the 205-lb. bout against South Side Syndicates' Rick 'Too Slick" San Nicolas, who has yet to win in 10 fights.

Newcomers are squaring off in the 145-lb., 155-lb., 160-lb., and 135-lb. bouts with Benavente facing Borja, Martin challenging Duenas, Cepeda meeting Taitano, and Manglona fighting Cruz.

Mundo will have his baptism of fire in another 135-lb. bout against Saipan's Jason Teregeyo, who holds a 0-1 record. In a 140-lb fight, Mark "The Dark" Nuque will stake his 3-0 record against fellow Saipan fighter Kev "The Rev" Esteves.

All supporting bouts are subject for changes and Trench Tech is still open for fighters interested in participating in next month's events.

After the preliminary fights, Trench Tech will have combatants from Korean Top Team dueling fighters from the former's stable.

Hyun Gyu Lim will be challenging Slade "The Rage" Adelbai in a 180-lb. bout, Dr. Kang" Bung Chan Kang will go up against Fasi "Quikdraw" in a 155-lb. event, while Young Nam Gu will be squaring off against Chris "No Love" Laayug in 145-lb. bout.

Meanwhile, tickets for Fearless is now available at the following stores: Boarderline, 670 Rocksteady Shop, Hannam Super Market, Mobil Kagman, and Trench Tech gym in San Antonio. Ticket prizes are $20 for general admission and $30 for VIP.

For every ticket sold in ROP 8, Trench Tech will donate $1 to the relief funds for the earthquake-ravaged Haiti.

For more information, contact Cuki Alvarez at 483-4MMA.

WUSHIN

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layups. Gunners Jun Tabora and James Abuy could not get their offense going together, as one was seated on the bench, while the other was on the court.

Wushin was ahead by only two, 53-51, going into the last two and a half minutes of the third period when Wushin had an 8-2 windup with Tabora on the bench to take a 61-53 lead.

Tabora spent a few more minutes on the sidelines and Loyola continued to struggle on offense, opening the fourth period with three straight errors. When Tabora checked back in, it was Abuy's turn to sit down. Abuy left the game with nine points and when he returned later, he was scoreless, failing to help Tabora on offense. Tabora scored eight in the final canto, but it was not enough to bail Loyola out of trouble.

Wushin had lesser problems on offense with Sonny Ebuen leading the team with 16 markers and making a lot of uncontested shots. Ferdie Tobias and Danny Dayrit also provided the needed points, firing 15 and 12 markers. Wushin's big men contributed on offense, too, as they capitalized on Loyola's failure to buckle down on defense, making easy shots underneath. Edel Carino tallied 15, Art Trajano made 11, and Jojo Garon chipped in nine.

Tabora topped all scorers with 24 and Loyola drew double figures from only two other players. Ed Cosino logged 11, but was held to only two points in the second half, while Jinang also drilled 11, but could not make baskets in streaks.

In the open division, Noni capitalized on a lethargic IT&E team to nail a five-point win.

Noni broke the game wide open in the third period, leading by as much as 13 points before IT&E made a comeback in the fourth and fell short. Majority of IT&E players suited up for Prospects in the UBA finals, clinching the championship against Ol'Aces on Monday night.

Wowie Abuel, who struggled in Noni's last few games in the regular season, regained his shooting touch from beyond the arc, hitting eight triples and finishing with 27 points. He and Bon Tamayo combined for six triples in the first half, which ended with Noni on top, 40-31.

Abuel made two more rainbow shots and had 10 points in the third period to keep Noni's distance, 65-58, entering the final canto.

IT&E made repeated comeback bids and sliced the lead to as low as four points, 73-77, with less than four minutes left on the match. However, clutch baskets from Bart Demapan and Kae Bernardo widened the gap, anew and preserved the win for Noni. Demapan made two baskets in the paint, while Bernardo completed a three-point play in Noni's ensuing offensive sets.

Masters

Wushin 82 – Ebuen 16, Tobias 15, Carino 15, Dayrit 12, Trajano 11, Samson 2, Leong 2.

Loyola 71 – Tabora 24, Cosino 11, Jinang 11, Villarin 9, Abuy 9, De La Torre 3, Manalili 2, Bicera 2.

Scoring by quarters: 27-15, 42-41, 61-41, 82-71.

Open

Noni Saipan 84—Abuel 27, Lerio 13, Bernardo 11, Tamayo10, Demapan 9, Aquino 7.

IT&E 79 – Cadagat 24, Mendiola 19, Peredo 12, Pagarao 11, Lauron 7, Lansang 3, Moises 2.

Scoring by quarters: 19-16, 40-31, 65-58, 84-79.

MVA

From Page 28

time of 1:45:51.

Following a traditional chant by Chamorro dancers, racers took off at 6:30am to the blowing of a conch shell. The estimated 10-mile run began at American Memorial Park Micro Beach and headed to the peak of Mt. Tapochao, the highest point of the island, before traveling a meandering route back to the park. A total of 40 competitors—including walkers—opted for the estimated 6-mile short course.

The course passed through old growth plantations on Mt. Tapochao as well as the young plantation and wild coffee trees found on Navy Hill. The route traversed the Camacho bee farm, a dry stream, and trails featured in the annual XTERRA Saipan competition. Runners also enjoyed a pick-me-up at several checkpoints with chocolate covered expresso beans, courtesy of event sponsor Marianas Coffee. An awards banquet followed at Micro Beach.

"The Marianas Coffee Trail Run aims to attract competitors by providing challenging trail terrain in the context of a beautiful course," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "The three coffee plantations featured in the run are just a taste of the many scenic sights that visiting athletes can enjoy along the way."

The MVA thanks event sponsors Marianas Coffee Company of Mr. & Mrs. Chuck Jordon as well as in-kind contributors Pacific Islands Club, Aqua Resort Club, Saipan Grand Hotel, Saipan Sunset Cruise., Inc., Saipan Sea Ventures Inc.. Supporters included Team PDI, KFC Triathlon Club, Viva La Saipan, Parks & Recreation, Northern Mariana Athletic Association, Landowners B.J. Attao and Frank Camacho, Nursing Club from the NMC, Joshua and Mamiko Berger, Lewie Tenorio, American Memorial Park, and all the volunteers who supported the event.

The MVA is now preparing for the trio of runs and triathlons in March 2010, including the Saipan Marathon, XTERRA Saipan Championships, and Tagaman. ***(PR)***

SABLAN

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with 202 pinfalls and slowed down in Game 2 with 176 before closing out with 204 and 237 pinfalls in the last two games.

All the Top 3 finishers bowled on Tuesday or in the second day of the roll-offs. Bowlers are allowed to join the event for two days, but only the higher score is counted.

In the Queen of the Lanes tournament, Sablan topped 13 other female keglers for the January tiara.

Sablan leaned on a strong start to win by 25 pinfalls against runner-up Elena Soll. Sablan scored 206 pinfalls in Game 1 then recorded 155, 180, and 190 pinfalls in Games 2 to 4 for a total of 731 and average of 182.75. Soll had a four-game tally of 706 pinfalls and average of 176.5, as she went off to a slow start with 162 pinfalls. Soll bounced back in Game 2 with 211 pinfalls and carded 171 and 162 in the last two games.

Diane Camacho saved third place with her 682 pinfalls. She logged 160 and 195 pinfalls in the first two games and posted 170 and 157 in Games 3 and 4, respectively, for an average of 170.5.

McKenzie tops Prince of the Lanes tilt

Marion McKenzie prevailed over five other participants in the Fiji Water Prince/Princess of the Lanes tournament to rule the first roll-off of the season.

Marion had a four-game total of 689 pinfalls, beating runner-up M.J. Aldan (573 pinfalls) and Leeanne Yarobwemal (571). The three other youth bowlers entered in the event were Nikko Gutierrez (549), Troy Verdaguer (505), and Marcel McKenzie (442).

The battle for the Fiji Water Prince/Princess of the Lanes title was down to six youth bowlers after Raphael Zapanta decided to play in the men's roll-off. Zapanta, who won 11 of the 12 monthly roll-offs last year, finished only 17th in his debut in the King of the Lanes.

RAMBLERS

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The win was only Ramblers' second in nine games, but it was enough to end the team's misfortunes in the last five matches.

Pitcher Joe Quitugua led Ramblers with his four RBIs. He went 3-for-4 at bat and scored three runs. First baseman Jimmy Manalo added three RBIs, while Ben Falig, Jess Magofna, Sidney Kani, and Noel Deleon Guerrero chipped in two RBIs each.

Falig blasted a two-run homer at the top of the first inning, giving Ramblers a 9-0 lead. Rambers never relinquished the top spot from thereon, dropping Fuegu to a 1-7 mark.

Chura 15, Calikano 11

Shortstop Pete Tomokane recorded six RBIs, lifting Chura to a 15-11 win over Calikano.

Chura improved to a 6-1 record for solo fourth place in the team standings, while Calikano fell to a 3-5 slate.

After flying out in his first at bat, Tomokane went 3-for-3 in his next appearances at home plate. He had a three-run homer at the top of the second inning to lead Chura's rally, turning a 1-3 deficit to an 8-3 lead.

Chura's defense shut out Calikano in the next three innings, while Tomokane continued to hit his target, drilling a two-run single and one-run triple in the fourth and sixth inning, respectively.

Island Rebels 15, Advance 9

Island Rebels gained a share of the lead with Natibu after outclassing Advance X-Terminators, 15-11.

Island Rebels maintained its perfect record at 7-0, while Advance absorbed its sixth loss in seven games.

Back-to-back homers from Ray Cepeda and Roy Celis at the bottom of the first inning allowed Island Rebels to take early control of the game en route to their clean slate in the 21-team league.

Celis went perfect at bat with his 2-for-2 and tallied three RBIs. Byron had a two-run homer in the fifth, went 2-for-4 at bat, and scored three runs and two RBIs. Cepeda and Craig Sanchez also contributed two RBIs each, while five others at least logged one RBI apiece.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	29	13	.690	–
Toronto	23	22	.511	7 1/2
New York	18	26	.409	12
Philadelphia	15	29	.341	15
New Jersey	3	40	.070	26 1/2

Southeast Division

Atlanta	29	14	.674	–
Orlando	29	16	.644	1
Miami	23	21	.523	6 1/2
Charlotte	22	22	.500	7 1/2
Washington	14	30	.318	15 1/2

Central Division

Cleveland	35	11	.761	–
Chicago	21	22	.488	12 1/2
Milwaukee	18	25	.419	15 1/2
Indiana	16	29	.356	18 1/2
Detroit	15	28	.349	18 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	30	15	.667	–
San Antonio	25	18	.581	4
Memphis	24	19	.558	5
Houston	24	20	.545	5 1/2
New Orleans	24	20	.545	5 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	30	14	.682	–
Utah	26	18	.591	4
Portland	27	19	.587	4
Oklahoma City	24	20	.545	6
Minnesota	9	37	.196	22

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	34	11	.756	–
Phoenix	26	21	.553	9
L.A. Clippers	20	24	.455	13 1/2
Sacramento	16	28	.364	17 1/2
Golden State	13	30	.302	20

Yesterday's Games

L.A. Lakers 115, Washington 103
New York 132, Minnesota 105
Dallas 108, Milwaukee 107
Charlotte 114, Phoenix 109, OT
Sacramento 99, Golden State 96

NBA LEADERS

Scoring

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
James, CLE	46	470	354	1377	29.9
Anthony, DEN	38	384	327	1130	29.7
Durant, OKC	44	427	372	1289	29.3
Bryant, LAL	44	462	267	1246	28.3
Wade, MIA	44	421	307	1194	27.1
Ellis, GOL	41	421	198	1071	26.1
Nowitzki, DAL	43	387	278	1081	25.1
Bosh, TOR	45	376	319	1077	23.9
Roy, POR	40	328	213	924	23.1
Jamison, WAS	34	275	136	739	21.7
Johnson, ATL	43	355	123	907	21.1
Randolph, MEM	43	357	180	899	20.9
Stoudemire, PHX	46	360	235	955	20.8
Maggette, GOL	41	271	298	849	20.7
Evans, SAC	39	296	194	807	20.7
Gay, MEM	41	320	166	840	20.5
Kaman, LAC	40	336	132	804	20.1
Jackson, CHA	43	311	178	859	20.0
Duncan, SAN	40	315	163	793	19.8
Rose, CHI	43	356	127	843	19.6

FG Percentage

	FG	FGA	PCT
Perkins, BOS	202	319	.633
Gasol, MEM	238	394	.604
Howard, ORL	253	422	.600
Horford, ATL	248	425	.584
Hilario, DEN	235	404	.582
Bynum, LAL	265	472	.561
Stoudemire, PHX	360	649	.555
Landry, HOU	258	467	.552
Millsap, UTA	188	341	.551
Lee, NYK	344	626	.550

Rebounds

	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Howard, ORL	45	169	428	597	13.3
Noah, CHI	42	162	347	509	12.1
Camby, LAC	43	136	382	518	12.0
Randolph, MEM	43	198	298	496	11.5
Lee, NYK	43	109	383	492	11.4
Bosh, TOR	45	134	365	499	11.1
Wallace, CHA	42	85	377	462	11.0
Boozer, UTA	44	86	391	477	10.8
Haywood, WAS	42	181	268	449	10.7
Duncan, SAN	40	124	291	415	10.4

Assists

	G	AST	AVG
Paul, NOR	36	403	11.2
Nash, PHX	46	508	11.0
Rondo, BOS	41	397	9.7
Williams, UTA	40	384	9.6
Kidd, DAL	43	395	9.2
B. Davis, LAC	44	358	8.1
James, CLE	46	359	7.8
Westbrook, OKC	44	323	7.3
Arenas, WAS	32	230	7.2
Jennings, MIL	42	262	6.2

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

BUDWEISER SOFTBALL STANDINGS

Natibu	7	0
Island Rebels	7	0
Man Amigos	7	1
SaiPal	5	2
Freedom Air Flyers	5	2
Chura	6	1
San Roque	3	2
Ur Balls	4	2
6-Pack	4	3
Hitz	4	3
Blazers	3	3
Red Eye	3	4
Calikano-Falcons	3	5
G-Ballers	2	5
Go For Broke	2	5
Ramblers	2	7
Berdax	1	4
Team Familia	1	5
Lancheros	1	5
X-Terminators	1	6
Team Fuegu	1	7

2009 UBA/Miller Lite Men's Basketball League Playoffs

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Advance' Jun Estolas is clobbered by a phalanx of Prospects defenders.

Diamond's Bruce Berline, right, beats Noni's Glenn Aquino in the battle for the loose ball.

Prospects' Ryan Sanciango is chased by three Advance defenders during their semis duel.

Advance's Jorge De Guzman tries to keep his balance after getting the loose ball.

Ol'Aces' Ed Diaz eludes his defenders.

Noni Saipan's Bon Tamayo fakes off the defense of Diamond's Tim Wesley during their playoff game in the 2009 UBA/Miller Lite Men's Basketball League.

Ol'Aces' Peter Camacho, right, is held in by Noni Saipan's Kae Bernardo during their semis tiff.

Advance's Junar Guiab, right, looks for a teammate to pass the ball to as he is tightly guarded by Prospects' Alex Lauron.

Noni Saipan's Ivan Devero goes for a fastbreak shot against Diamond defenders.

10 fighters to debut in Fearless

Ten combatants will debut in the octagon cage when Trench Tech's Rites of Passage 8: Fearless is staged on Feb. 12 at the Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Serena Williams survives after Venus' departure

Defending champion Serena Williams survived against Victoria Azarenka in a classic comeback win Wednesday, preventing back-to-back upsets after her sister Venus lost to Li Na.

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Wushin, Noni move closer to finals

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Wushin Corp. and Noni Saipan are a win away from advancing to the finals of their respective divisions in the 2009 PILCOWA Basketball League after thwarting separate foes on Tuesday at the JP Center Basketball Court.

Wushin outclassed University of Loyola in the masters division, 82-71, to make it to the winner's bracket semifinals and face pennant champion Ebisuya for the first finals seat this Saturday.

In the open division, Noni Saipan outplayed IT&E, 81-74, to earn the right to challenge Saipan Fresh Market in the winner's bracket semifinals.

Wushin, meanwhile, pulled ahead by much as 14 points in the early goings of the fourth canto against University of Loyola and though the lead went down to five, the latter couldn't just overhaul the deficit, failing to find the right combination on the court.

Loyola stuck with its tall, but slow lineup, allowing Wushin to escape with easy fastbreak

See WUSHIN on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Wushin Corp.'s Art Trajano drives base line against University of Loyola's Ed Cosino during their playoff game in the PILCOWA caging on Tuesday at the JP Center Basketball Court.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
IT&E's Brad Ruszala goes up the trail toward Mt. Tapochao during last Saturday's Marianas Coffee Trail Run.

MVA: 2010 Marianas Coffee Trail Run is biggest one yet

The Marianas Coffee Trail Run continues to grow in popularity each year, registering a record 80 participants last Saturday for this annual signature event of the Marianas Visitors Authority.

The event attracted double the number of last year's entrants, with 40 participants from Japan and over 30 participants from the Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands.

This year's winners were—starting with the short course—was Antonio Florence who clocked in at 57:03 follow by Jake Vandam with a time of 58:33. Securing third place was Gigo Tomokane who post 59:39. In the female overall went to Akane Imaya, who slipped in at 1:12:22. Behind her was Aldrich Wantha with a time of 1:15:59 and in third was Amanda Allen with a time of 1:22:28. In the longer course, tough runners were closing in close as Fujio Miyachi captured his second first place award securing a time of 1:27:09. Coming in at second was Ketson "Jack" Kabriel just about three minutes shy with a time of 1:30:11 followed by Ji Keumbae with a time of 1:32:30. In the female division, it was Mamiko Berger crossing the finish line in 1:37:33 followed by Yasue Nakahara from Japan with a time of 1:42:18. In third place was Mai Hasegawa who post a

See MVA on Page 26

Ramblers end skid in Chamolinian league

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Roy Celis, seen here getting ready at bat, made three RBIs in Island Rebels' 15-9 win against Advance in the Chamolinian softball league on Monday at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Ramblers got off to a strong start en route to a 22-12 win over Team Fuegu during their game in Chamolinian Softball Association's 2009 Budweiser Slow-pitch Softball League on Monday at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

See RAMBLERS on Page 26

Sablan, Castro top January roll-offs

January King and Queen of the Lanes winner Alex Castro, right, and Gina Sablan show their certificate during the awards ceremony on Tuesday at the Saipan Bowling Center.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Alex Castro and Gina Sablan notched the first title in Saipan Bowling Association's monthly Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes Tournament.

Castro bested 19 others keglers for the January King of the Lanes crown after posting a total of 878 pinfalls in four games. Castro, who was runner-up to Percy Omechelang in the 2009 King of the Lanes tournament finale, knocked down more than 200 pins in all four games. His best performance came in Game 2 when he tallied 233 pinfalls. Castro had 218, 202, and 225 pinfalls in Games 1, 3, and 4 for an average of 219.50 pinfalls.

Placing second to Castro was Paul Pangelinan, who had a four-game total of 862 pinfalls and average of 215.5. Castro played strong in the first two Games with his 240 and 223 pinfalls, but fell to second place when he only posted 178 and 221 in Games 3 and 4, respectively.

Completing the Top 3 was Omechelang, who logged 819 pinfalls in four games for an average of 204.75. Omechelang started the tournament

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